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SELECT POEMS
OF
TENNYSON

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Aldworth,
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Dear Tennyson says to thank
the Theodore Rand for his
letter & kindly article.
The 'Bayle song' shows that a
charm.

Aug 22/41

[Fac-simile of a letter from Lord Tennyson to Dr. Rand.]

~~7312p8~~

SELECT POEMS
OF
TENNYSON

WITH
INTRODUCTION AND NOTES

BY
FREDERICK HENRY SYKES, M.A., PH.D.,

FELLOW OF THE JOHNS HOPKINS UNIVERSITY.



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PREFACE.

This edition of Select Poems of Tennyson is intended as an aid to the study of literature in High Schools, and more particularly for students preparing for the Government examinations of Ontario in 1895. The present volume endeavours to make possible for those who use it the thorough study of the poetry it contains, a study, the ideal of which, however much the editor falls short of it, is Ruskin's treatment of the passage from *Lycidas* in his lecture "Of Kings' Treasuries." It is only when we have striven with great poetry, weighing every sentence, every epithet, that it yields its utmost blessing.

Excluding *The Holy Grail*, which, as the chief poem in the present selection, stands first, the poems are arranged chronologically, and, taken in all, furnish the material for a knowledge of the poet from his early rhythm and colour studies to the period of his greatest achievement. The text of these poems corresponds with that of the library edition of the poet's works, published by Macmillan; but the variant readings of the earlier editions have been carefully noted, thus affording comparisons by which a clearer sense of Tennyson's artistic excellence may be obtained. This same principle underlies the citations from Tennyson's sources; as, for example, from the *Morte Darthur*. Similarly the critical opinions that are quoted are not intended to furnish useless intellectual lumber, something to be learnt and stored away, killing the joy of poetry with the drudgery of prose. They must, if rightly used, be used only as suggestions of deeper

truth and beauty, that reveal themselves to the trained critics, and which we, following their hints, must find and feel, not learn by rote.

The article *Linæ Labor* in the first Appendix, which makes accessible by fac-similes of Tennyson's MSS. the early forms of the Songs of *The Princess*, is due to the kindness of Dr. Theodore H. Rand, the fortunate owner of the manuscripts. With no less kindness, Dr. Rand has allowed the reproduction in fac-simile of Tennyson's letter of thanks to him.

The annotator at best is the domestic drudge of literature ; his virtues are the humble virtues of the beast of burden ; his reward, their reward. As he dismisses the work that has grown dear to him by the very toil it has cost him, he can only turn to himself and say, with better men,

“The uses of labour are surely done ;
There remaineth a rest for the people of God ;
And I have had trouble enough, for one.”



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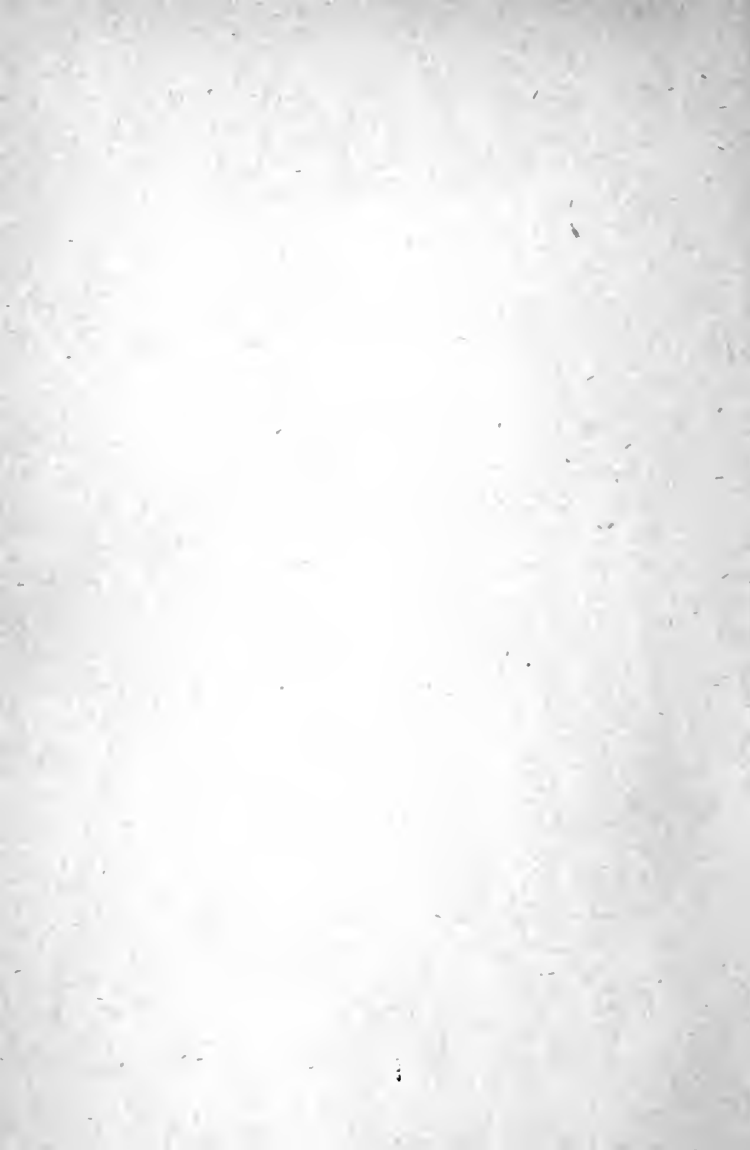
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INTRODUCTION.





INTRODUCTION.

TENNYSON : HIS LIFE.

In Somersby. A little, a very little, wooded village in Southern Lancashire ; behind it the white road climbing up to Tetford and the high wold ; below it the brook slipping down past many a thorp off to the North Sea ; pasture land about, dotted with sheep ; misty hills afar-off : such is Somersby. As you come into the village by the hedge-row road winding northward from Horncastle, you see only one house of importance. It is a large rambling two-story house, with tiled roof and white wall, standing amidst elms and poplars, and overlooking from its side windows a quiet secluded lawn, edged with yews. This house in the early years of the century was the rectory of the Rev. George Clayton Tennyson, vicar of Grimsby, Bag Enderby, and Somersby. He was a just, austere man, but a man of many accomplishments, fond of music, a mathematician, linguist, and artist. If rather a hard man, even in bargains, any hardness in his nature was compensated for by the tenderness of his wife, daughter of the vicar of the neighbouring town of Louth.

The rectory was large, but it was none too large for the children that came to fill it—five daughters, and seven.

sons of whom the third, born August 6, 1809, was Alfred Tennyson. The family was bookish; no sooner did the boys learn to write than they began authorship, and essays, poems, novels, tragedies are the story of their boyhood. Alfred wrote his first verses, when a bit of a schoolboy at Louth. They were about the flowers of the garden, and when he brought his elder brother his slate covered with blank verse after the manner of the *Seasons*, "Yes you can write," said Charles. He wrote an elegy, however, on his grandmother, and his grandfather, giving him ten shillings, said with the wisdom of age, "There, that is the first money you have earned by your poetry, and, take my word for it, it will be the last." The facility of those early days must have been wonderful; the boy was not twelve years old when he had completed an epic of some four thousand lines; even the matured poet was not so ambitious.

One story that Tennyson himself tells lets us see the passionate devotion to poetry that possessed him even in childhood. When the news of Byron's death penetrated into that remote household, it came with a thrill of infinite grief the poet never forgot:—

"Byron was dead!" I thought the whole world was at an end. I thought everything was over and finished for everyone—that nothing else mattered. I remember I walked out alone, and carved 'Byron is dead' into the sandstone." One thinks of Jane Welsh away in the north and the "awful and dreary blank" that came over creation when she heard the same words.

As the boys grew up they walked to the village-school of Holywell Glen, a spot that nature with trees and terraced rocks has made of perfect beauty. Still later they were sent to the grammar-school of Louth. Of these days

nothing of note is recorded, except perhaps a weakness in arithmetic and a tendency to reverie that made the future poet to his surprise often late for lessons.

What told on Alfred's life, was not those years so much as the following. Leaving Louth at the age of eleven, he was for eight years home in Somersby, studying with tutors, reading and writing prodigiously, going in to Horncastle for music and to meet one who afterwards became his wife, Miss Sellwood, niece of Sir John Franklin. Then there were the winter evenings spent by the family in music and reading; the long tramps over the wolds, all the boys smoking; reveries under the stars or in the twilight—"he would sit on a gate gawmin' about him," as farmer Baumer saw it. The summers were spent down at the little sea-side cottage at Mablethorpe in full view of the fens,—

' Stretched wide and wild the waste enormous marsh.'

and of the

' Wild wave in the wide North-sea
Green-glimmering towards the summit.'

How all this pervades Tennyson's poetry; how it streams back to him in memory,—the 'ridged wolds,' 'the sand-built ridge,' the 'lowly cottage,'

' The woods that belt the grey hill side.
The seven elms, the poplars four
That stand beside my father's door,
And chiefly from the brook that loves
To purl o'er matted cress, and ribbed sand,
Or dimple in the dark of rushy coves.'

Such memories never vanish; in the susceptible tenacious mind of the poet they linger, welling up with fountain-like strength and freshness forever.

First authorship. In 1827 the eldest son Frederick went up to Cambridge, leaving Charles and Alfred to

carry on their devotion to reading, rambling, smoking, and poetry. Once, as the old nurse relates, they planned a distant expedition that called for more money than the tight purse of the father would allow.- Why not print your poems, their confidant, the coachman,* suggested. Out of the litter of MSS. they culled a hundred pages of boyish verse, called the collection *Poems by two Brothers*, sold it to a Louth bookseller, and rich with £10 for the copyright set off on their tour through the Lincolnshire churches.

At Cambridge. On Nov. 9th, 1828, Charles and Alfred joined Frederick at Cambridge. They were shy country lads, with no liking for society or for the sports and interests usual in university life. Alfred however became a member of a small society of choice spirits, which, under the name of the Apostles, brought together a few men, everyone of whom was afterwards famous. Such were Alford, Merivale, Milnes, Trench, Maurice, and above all Arthur Hallam, younger than Tennyson, a singularly sweet and brilliant genius, "as near perfection," said his friend, "as mortal man can be." Tennyson though an Apostle did not cease to be a disciple of the muses. The Chancellor's prize, the goal of ambition to all the college poets, fell to him in 1829 for his verses on "Timbuctoo," Moreover he was constantly writing one thing or another and reading aloud his work to friends who would drop into his room evenings, in his strange deep monotonous half-chant.

Poems, 1830. Thus was the material made ready for the poet's first real volume, the thin precious little book called *Poems, chiefly Lyrical*,* 1830. Here was the advent of a new poet; one who had, to quote Hallam,

*References are made to the poems of this volume on pp. 201, 212.

luxuriance of imagination yet control over it, power of entering into ideal characters and moods, picturesque delineation of objects, holding them fused in strong emotion, variety of lyrical measures, responsive to every changing feeling; elevation, soberness, impressiveness of thought. The tone and manner were new, provoking opposition and challenging and receiving criticism. The criticism is long dead; but the voice being authentic lived on, winning adherents.

In 1830 there was an exciting page of romance when Tennyson, Hallam, and some other Apostles went to Spain to join in the movement against Spanish despotism. Their movement was quixotic, and came to nothing as far as Spanish liberty was concerned; but it did much to cement the friendship of Tennyson and Hallam. This friendship grew closer even when the poet, on his father's death in 1831, withdrew from Cambridge to his home. Hallam and Spedding and Garden would go down to join the family group in Somersby. What sweet life those lines of Tennyson recalls, when thinking most of Hallam he wrote,

'O bliss, when all in circle drawn
About him, heart and ear were fed
To hear him, as he lay and read
The Tuscan poets on the lawn:
Or in the all-golden afternoon
A guest, or happy sister, sung,
Or here she brought the harp and flung
A ballad to the brightening moon.'

In 1831 the bond of friendship was made still stronger by Hallam's engagement to the poet's sister Emily.

Poems of 1832. The following year when Hallam went up to London and the study of the law, Tennyson remained in Somersby working on his second volume. This

time his name appeared, *Poems**, by Alfred Tennyson, 1832. Here the poet while losing none of the lyrical gift of his earlier work, adds to it an ever deepening grasp of life. Here, too, we see him entering on three phases of his most characteristic work: Classical reproduction in the *Lotos-Eaters*, Arthurian poetry in *The Lady of Shalott*, and the English idyll in *The Miller's Daughter*.

In London. In September of 1833 Arthur Hallam, who had been long ailing, died abroad. The family at Somersby were plunged in affliction, and Tennyson whose loss was not less than his sister's, threw himself into work in London.

Nothing is more strikingly characteristic of Tennyson's self-restraint than the following ten years of his life. He wrote constantly, but with the exception of a stray poem in annual collections, printed nothing. They were years of silence and meditation that genius must have. Some of his college friends were in London, and saw something of the poet either in the gatherings of the Anonymous Club or dining at the Cock in Fleet Street, "sitting late into the evening over the pint of port and cigars." Carlyle had come up to London, and between him and the poet there sprang up a lasting friendship. With Carlyle, FitzGerald, Spedding and Milnes as associates, Tennyson was kept in touch with the world; while an occasional visit or excursion into the country kept him in touch with nature.

Poems of 1842. In 1842 he broke silence with the two volumes of *Poems*† by Alfred Tennyson. The volume contained *The Epic*, *The Gardener's Daughter*, *Dora*, *Locksley Hall*, *Ulysses*, *Sir Galahad*, *Break, Break*,

*References to the contents may be found on pp. 217, 225, 242.

†See pp. 228, 242.

Break, and other poems of sustained power and sweetness, of rich pictorial art, of lofty faith in humanity and in human progress. It was received with instant favour, conquering even the critics, and establishing deep and sound the foundations of his fame.

Two pictures of him at this time are given by his two friends, Carlyle and his wife. Jane Welsh Carlyle's is womanly: "A very handsome man, and a whole-hearted one, with something of the gipsy in his appearance, which for me is perfectly charming." But how the poet lives in the portrait Carlyle sent Emerson! "A great shock of rough, dusty-musty hair; bright, laughing, hazel eyes; massive aquiline face, most massive yet most delicate; of sallow brown complexion, almost Indian-looking; clothes cynically loose, free and easy; smokes infinite tobacco. His voice is musically metallic—fit for loud laughter and piercing wail, or all that may lie between; speech and speculation free and plenteous; I do not meet, in these late decades, such company over a pipe."

The Laureateship. Little by little Tennyson's circle of friends increased, embracing even men of political prominence like Gladstone. It was therefore not difficult to secure him a pension which set him free from anxiety about money. In 1847 *The Princess* was published. In 1850, on the death of Wordsworth, Tennyson, not without some hard feelings of the envious, received the laurel. The same year after a quiet growth of ten years in the poet's mind, *In Memoriam* was issued, commemorating in a series of elegies, the loss of Arthur Hallam.

The third event of this remarkable year was the poet's marriage to his Lincolnshire friend of early days, Miss Sellwood. They settled in Twickenham, but removed three years later to Farringford, in the Isle of Wight.

At Farringford. The first work from this new home was *Maud*, 1855, about which critical opinion is still unsettled. Four years later followed *Enid*, *Vivien*, *Elaine*, and *Guinevere*, about which criticism speaks out bold and clear, as making with the other *Idylls of the King*, Tennyson's greatest contribution to English literature. To his noble group of English idylls, he added in 1864, *Enoch Arden*, *Aylmer's Field*, and *The Northern Farmer*.

At Aldworth. The narrative of later years is the story of constant production and of increasing fame. In 1869 the poet, "frightened away by hero-worshippers" built a new home at Blackburn, in a remote part of Surrey, henceforth dividing his time between Farringford and Aldworth. It is from these two residences that he took his title of baron, when in 1884 he accepted the peerage he had before refused. It was at Aldworth in December of 1869 that Sir Frederick Pollock staying with the Tennysons heard the poet read *The Holy Grail*.

Entering on a form of composition to which he had long been tentatively approaching, Tennyson devoted himself in his remaining years chiefly to dramatic composition. He gave to the world, *Queen Mary*, 1875; *Harold*, 1877; *The Falcon*, 1879; *The Cup*, 1881; *The Promise of May* 1882; *Becket*, 1884; *The Foresters*, 1892,—all of which have been produced on the stage, some with indifferent, others with pronounced success. Scattered through these years of dramatic work were the many short poems that make up the volumes *Ballads*, *Tiresias*, *Demeter*, and *The Death of Æneïas*.

Old age came upon the poet with his powers unimpaired and death found him girt with his singing robe, in his heart faith in progress, in the Glean, and the strong hope to meet his Pilot beyond the bar of the great deep. On

Oct. 6th, 1892, at half-past one in the morning, Alfred Tennyson died.

“Death’s little rift hath rent the matchless lute :
The singer of undying song is dead.”

SOME CHARACTERISTICS OF TENNYSON’S POETRY.

Of all the poets of this century Tennyson has been the most widely read, and the most widely influential. The reasons for the charm of his poetry are in part due to the substance of his work, the character of his thought, and in part due to its beauty of language, tone, and form.

As interpreting nature. No poet, not even Wordsworth, has had a keener eye for the processes of nature, for the loveliness of English landscape. Whether it be the blackness of the ash-buds or the ruby buds of the lime, the chestnut buds glistening to the breezy blue, the pillor’d dusk of the sycamores, the smoking of the yew-tree, the netted sunbeam of the brook, the wave green-glimmering towards its summit, or the falls like a downward smoke,—everywhere we see the poet fixing the beauty in a phrase, and helping to make the charm of nature a greater part in the life of ordinary men. When Holbrook in *Cranford* comes upon an old cedar, he quotes,

“The cedar spreads his dark-green layers of shade.”

“Capital term—layers! Wonderful man! . . . When I saw the review of his poems in *Blackwood*, I . . . walked seven miles and ordered them. Now, what colour are ash-buds in March? An old fool that I am—this young man comes and tells me. Black as ash-buds in March. And I’ve lived all my life in the country.”

As the voice of his age. Without being a leader of thought, Tennyson has given, of all writers, the fullest utterance to the thoughts of his time. Early Liberalism is in *Locksley Hall*, and late Conservatism in its sequel. The moral condition of commercial England at the middle of the century is depicted in *Maul*. The war of the Crimea lives in *The Charge of the Light Brigade*. *The Princess* takes all its serious background from the problem of the relations of men and women in the changing conditions of modern life. In St. Simeon Stylites as a negative, in Arthur as a positive picture, we see how closely his conception of the duty of labour, of active duty in life coincides with the best spirit of his contemporaries. The ideal of infinite progress, gradual, enlightened progress, that buoys up this nineteenth century, and makes it distinct from every preceding age, animates his poetry from his first volume to his last.

As a dramatic creator. To his accurate and poetical interpretation of nature and his age must be added some gift in interpreting human character. Here we must not rely on his more elaborate attempts at the portrayal of character, as in the *Idylls*. It is generally felt that the poet has not succeeded in giving the personages of the Arthurian story the life and individuality that make them live before us. They are at times animated into life, but on the whole they are picturesque figures, noble paintings. It is the secret of life in art to paint from life; and so in poetry. Tennyson's true creations are those that lie, not far off in the misty past, but living about him. Even here his secluded life cut him off from a full knowledge of humanity. But within his limits what a series of living figures he has added to our acquaintance. How much more we know of human nature, and on its loveable side too, by

the many creations of his art,—the sweet girls and women like the Gardener's daughter and Dora, humorous shrewd countrymen like the Northern Farmer, or seaside folk like Enoch Arden.

The nobility of his moral tone. Love with Tennyson is not the Byronic passion, but the lovely influence that perfumes the springtime of life, strengthens the soul in all good and unselfish deeds, and crowns human life in inviolable marriage with the greatest of human blessings. This conception of love meets us in its different phases throughout Tennyson's work—in the *Idylls of the King*, in the English idylls, in *Maud*, in *The Princess*. This noble and sane view of love goes hand in hand with other noble emotions. The heroism of the British soldier, the valour of the British sailor, the vital passion for knowledge, for wise freedom, and for human progress, with hatred of greed, of hypocrisy, and of inaction. These are some moral aspects of his work that appeal most strongly to English people, and make the spiritual blessing of his poetry not less than the intellectual blessing.

Artistic excellence. In the matter of form and expression Tennyson's place in literature is unique. No other writer in English approaches him in conscious artistic excellence. The story of his work is one of constant revision, guided by an exquisite sense of perfection in thought and language. Naturally simple and direct in his view of life, and gifted with the finest ear for musical cadence, Tennyson's work, as a lyric poet of the simpler emotions of life, is perfect. This simplicity and directness, it must be said, guided the choice and general treatment of all his subjects. In details, however, whenever the subject admitted it, he was not simple and direct, but elaborate and ornate. Revision after revision brought a polished

perfection that employed all the resources of rhetorical expression and of subtle suggestion ; hence those jewels five-words long, and those carefully wrought imitative rhythms.

Tennyson's poetry has held English-speaking people during most of this century with a crescent rather than decreascent power, because he has given the fullest representation of English life during the century. Some of his work must lose its charm as the ideals of life shift shape in future years ; but there is so much of his poetry that voices what is permanent in nature and human life that his name is surely inscribed on the eternal bead-roll of fame. We may miss the deepest passion, intuition into life at moments of supreme anguish,—Shakspeare's lightning illuminating the wildest storms of the tossing sea of life. Tennyson's genius is a milder radiance, which reveals quiet English lawns crowned with summer sea ; where happy lovers wander ; where gather groups of wise men delighting to recall the past or speak nobly of the present ; where the charm of the purity and beauty of nature is no less pervasive than the tone of sweetness and strength in the human spirit that dominates it.



THE HOLY GRAIL.

FROM noiseful arms, and acts of prowess done
In tournament or tilt, Sir Percivale,
Whom Arthur and his knighthood call'd The Pure,
Had pass'd into the silent life of prayer,
Praise, fast, and alms ; and leaving for the cowl
The helmet in an abbey far away
From Camelot, there, and not long after, died.

And one, a fellow-monk among the rest,
Ambrosius, loved him much beyond the rest,
And honour'd him, and wrought into his heart
A way by love that waken'd love within,
To answer that which came : and as they sat
Beneath a world-old yew-tree, darkening half
The cloisters, on a gustful April morn
That puff'd the swaying branches into smoke
Above them, ere the summer when he died,
The monk Ambrosius question'd Percivale :

‘O brother, I have seen this yew-tree smoke,
Spring after spring, for half a hundred years :
For never have I known the world without,
Nor ever stray’d beyond the pale : but thee,
When first thou camest—such a courtesy
Spake thro’ the limbs and in the voice—I knew
For one of those who eat in Arthur’s hall ;
For good ye are and bad, and like to coins,
Some true, some light, but every one of you
Stamp’d with the image of the King ; and now
Tell me, what drove thee from the Table Round,
My brother ? was it earthly passion crost ?’

‘Nay,’ said the knight ; ‘for no such passion mine.
But the sweet vision of the Holy Grail
Drove me from all vainglories, rivalries,
And earthly heats that spring and sparkle out
Among us in the jousts, while women watch *gloriously*
Who wins, who falls ; and waste the spiritual strength
Within us, better offer’d up to Heaven.’

To whom the monk : ‘The Holy Grail !—I trust
We are green in Heaven’s eyes ; but here too much
We moulder—as to things without I mean—
Yet one of your own knights, a guest of ours,
Told us of this in our refectory,
But spake with such a sadness and so low

We heard not half of what he said. What is it?
The phantom of a cup that comes and goes?’

‘Nay, monk ! what phantom?’ answer’d Percivale.
‘The cup, the cup itself, from which our Lord
Drank at the last sad supper with his own.
This, from the blessed land of Aromat—
After the day of darkness, when the dead
Went wandering o’er Moriah—the good saint
Arimathæan Joseph, journeying brought
To Glastonbury, where the winter thorn
Blossoms at Christmas, mindful of our Lord.
And there awhile it bode ; and if a man
Could touch or see it, he was heal’d at once,
By faith, of all his ills. But then the times
Grew to such evil that the holy cup
Was caught away to Heaven, and disappear’d.’

To whom the monk : ‘From our old books I know
That Joseph came of old to Glastonbury,
And there the heathen Prince, Arviragus,
Gave him an isle of marsh whereon to build ;
And there he built with wattles from the marsh
A little lonely church in days of yore,
For so they say, these books of ours, but seem
Mute of this miracle, far as I have read.
But who first saw the holy thing to-day?’

‘A woman,’ answer’d Percivale, ‘a nun,
And one no further off in blood from me
Than sister ; and if ever holy maid
With knees of adoration wore the stone,
A holy maid ; tho’ never maiden glow’d,
But that was in her earlier maidenhood,
With such a fervent flame of human love,
Which being rudely blunted, glanced and shot
Only to holy things ; to prayer and praise
She gave herself, to fast and alms. And yet,
Nun as she was, the scandal of the Court,
Sin against Arthur and the Table Round,
And the strange sound of an adulterous race,
Across the iron grating of her cell
Beat, and she pray’d and fasted all the more.

‘And he to whom she told her sins, or what
Her all but utter whiteness held for sin,
A man wellnigh a hundred winters old,
Spake often with her of the Holy Grail,
A legend handed down thro’ five or six,
And each of these a hundred winters old,
From our Lord’s time. And when King Arthur made
His Table Round, and all men’s hearts became
Clean for a season, surely he had thought
That now the Holy Grail would come again ;
But sin broke out. Ah, Christ, that it would come,

And heal the world of all their wickedness !
"O Father !" ask'd the maiden, "might it come
To me by prayer and fasting?" "Nay," said he,
"I know not, for thy heart is pure as snow."
And so she pray'd and fasted, till the sun
Shone, and the wind blew, thro' her, and I thought
She might have risen and floated when I saw her.

' For on a day she sent to speak with me.
And when she came to speak, behold her eyes
Beyond my knowing of them, beautiful,
Beyond all knowing of them, wonderful,
Beautiful in the light of holiness.
And "O my brother Percivale," she said,
"Sweet brother, I have seen the Holy Grail :
For, waked at dead of night, I heard a sound
As of a silver horn from o'er the hills
Blown, and I thought, 'It is not Arthur's use
To hunt by moonlight ;' and the slender sound
As from a distance beyond distance grew
Coming upon me—O never harp nor horn,
Nor aught we blow with breath, or touch with hand,
Was like that music as it came ; and then
Stream'd thro' my cell a cold and silver beam,
And down the long beam stole the Holy Grail,
Rose-red with beatings in it, as if alive,
Till all the white walls of my cell were dyed

With rosy colours leaping on the wall ;
And then the music faded, and the Grail
Past, and the beam decay'd, and from the walls
The rosy quiverings died into the night.
So now the Holy Thing is here again
Among us, brother, fast thou too and pray,
And tell thy brother knights to fast and pray,
That so perchance the vision may be seen
By thee and those, and all the world be heal'd."

'Then leaving the pale nun, I spake of this
To all men ; and myself fasted and pray'd
Always, and many among us many a week
Fasted and pray'd even to the uttermost,
Expectant of the wonder that would be.

'And one there was among us, ever moved
Among us in white armour, Galahad.
"God make thee good as thou art beautiful,"
Said Arthur, when he dubb'd him knight ; and none,
In so young youth, was ever made a knight
Till Galahad ; and this Galahad, when he heard
My sister's vision, fill'd me with amaze ;
His eyes became so like her own, they seem'd
Hers, and himself her brother more than I.

'Sister or brother none had he ; but some

Call'd him a son of Lancelot, and some said
Begotten by enchantment—chatterers they,
Like birds of passage piping up and down,
That gape for flies—we know not whence they
 come ;
For when was Lancelot wanderingly lewd ?

‘ But she, the wan sweet maiden, shore away
Clean from her forehead all that wealth of hair
Which made a silken mat-work for her feet ;
And out of this she plaited broad and long
A strong sword-belt, and wove with silver thread
And crimson in the belt a strange device,
A crimson grail within a silver beam ;
And saw the bright boy-knight, and bound it on him,
Saying, “ My knight, my love, my knight of heaven,
O thou, my love, whose love is one with mine,
I, maiden, round thee, maiden, bind my belt.
Go forth, for thou shalt see what I have seen,
And break thro’ all, till one will crown thee king
Far in the spiritual city :” and as she spake
She sent the deathless passion in her eyes
Thro’ him, and made him hers, and laid her mind
On him, and he believed in her belief.

‘ Then came a year of miracle : O brother,
In our great hall there stood a vacant chair,

| Fashion'd by Merlin ere he past away,
And carven with strange figures ; and in and out
The figures, like a serpent, ran a scroll
Of letters in a tongue no man could read.
| And Merlin call'd it "The Siege perilous,"
Perilous for good and ill ; "for there," he said,
"No man could sit but he should lose himself :"
And once by misadventence Merlin sat
In his own chair, and so was lost ; but he,
Galahad, when he heard of Merlin's doom,
Cried, "If I lose myself, I save myself!"

| 'Then on a summer night it came to pass,
While the great banquet lay along the hall,
That Galahad would sit down in Merlin's chair.

'And all at once, as there we sat, we heard
A cracking and a riving of the roofs,
And rending, and a blast, and overhead
Thunder, and in the thunder was a cry. |
And in the blast there smote along the hall
A beam of light seven times more clear than day :
And down the long beam stole the Holy Grail
All over cover'd with a luminous cloud,
And none might see who bare it, and it past.
But every knight beheld his fellow's face
As in a glory, and all the knights arose,

And staring each at other like dumb men
Stood, till I found a voice and sware a vow.

‘I sware a vow before them all, that I,
Because I had not seen the Grail, would ride
A twelvemonth and a day in quest of it,
Until I found and saw it, as the nun
My sister saw it ; and Galahad sware the vow,
And good Sir Bors, our Lancelot’s cousin, sware,
And Lancelot sware, and many among the knights,
And Gawain sware, and louder than the rest.’

Then spake the monk Ambrosius, asking him,
‘What said the King? Did Arthur take the vow?’

‘Nay, for my lord,’ said Percivale, ‘the King,
Was not in hall : for early that same day,
Scaped thro’ a cavern from a bandit hold,
An outraged maiden sprang into the hall
Crying on help : for all her shining hair
Was smear’d with earth, and either milky arm
Red-rent with hooks of bramble, and all she wore
Torn as a sail that leaves the rope is torn
In tempest : so the King arose and went
To smoke the scandalous hive of those wild bees
That made such honey in his realm. Howbeit
Some little of this marvel he too saw,

Returning o'er the plain that then began
To darken under Camelot ; whence the King
Look'd up, calling aloud, " Lo, there ! the roofs
Of our great hall are roll'd in thunder-smoke !
Pray Heaven, they be not smitten by the bolt."
For dear to Arthur was that hall of ours,
As having there so oft with all his knights
Feasted, and as the stateliest under heaven.

‘ O brother, had you known our mighty hall,
Which Merlin built for Arthur long ago !
For all the sacred mount of Camelot,
And all the dim rich city, roof by roof,
Tower after tower, spire beyond spire,
By grove, and garden-lawn, and rushing brook,
Climbs to the mighty hall that Merlin built.
And four great zones of sculpture, set betwixt
With many a mystic symbol, gird the hall :
And in the lowest beasts are slaying men,
And in the second men are slaying beasts,
And on the third are warriors, perfect men,
And on the fourth are men with growing wings,
And over all one statue in the mould
Of Arthur, made by Merlin, with a crown,
And peak'd wings pointed to the Northern Star.
And eastward fronts the statue, and the crown
And both the wings are made of gold, and flame

At sunrise till the people in far fields,
Wasted so often by the heathen hordes,
Behold it, crying, "We have still a King."

‘And, brother, had you known our hall within,
Broader and higher than any in all the lands !
Where twelve great windows blazon Arthur’s wars,
And all the light that falls upon the board
Streams thro’ the twelve great battles of our King.
Nay, one there is, and at the eastern end,
Wealthy with wandering lines of mount and mere,
Where Arthur finds the brand Excalibur.
And also one to the west, and counter to it,
And blank : and who shall blazon it ? when and
how ?—

O there, perchance, when all our wars are done,
The brand Excalibur will be cast away.

‘So to this hall full quickly rode the King,
In horror lest the work by Merlin wrought,
Dreamlike, should on the sudden vanish, wrapt
In unremorseful folds of rolling fire.
And in he rode, and up I glanced, and saw
The golden dragon sparkling over all :
And many of those who burnt the hold, their arms
Hack’d, and their foreheads grimed with smoke,
and sear’d,

Follow'd, and in among bright faces, ours,
Full of the vision, prest : and then the King
Spake to me, being nearest, "Percivale,"
(Because the hall was all in tumult—some
Vowing, and some protesting), "what is this?"

'O brother, when I told him what had chanced,
My sister's vision, and the rest, his face
Darken'd, as I have seen it more than once,
When some brave deed seem'd to be done in vain,
Darken ; and "Woe is me, my knights," he cried,
"Had I been here, ye had not sworn the vow."
Bold was mine answer, "Had thyself been here,
My King, thou wouldst have sworn." "Yea, yea,"
said he,
"Art thou so bold and hast not seen the Grail?"

"Nay, lord, I heard the sound, I saw the light,
But since I did not see the Holy Thing,
I sware a vow to follow it till I saw."

'Then when he ask'd us, knight by knight, if any
Had seen it, all their answers were as one :
"Nay, lord, and therefore have we sworn our vows."

"Lo now," said Arthur, "have ye seen a cloud?
What go ye into the wilderness to see?"

‘Then Galahad on the sudden, and in a voice
Shrilling along the hall to Arthur, call’d,
“But I, Sir Arthur, saw the Holy Grail,
I saw the Holy Grail and heard a cry—
‘O Galahad, and O Galahad, follow me.’”

““Ah, Galahad, Galahad,” said the King, “for
such

As thou art is the vision, not for these.
Thy holy nun and thou have seen a sign—
Holier is none, my Percivale, than she—
A sign to maim this Order which I made.
But ye, that follow but the leader’s bell”
(Brother, the King was hard upon his knights)
“Taliessin is our fullest throat of song,
And one hath sung and all the dumb will sing.
Lancelot is Lancelot, and hath overborne
Five knights at once, and every younger knight,
Unproven, holds himself as Lancelot,
Till overborne by one, he learns—and ye,
What are ye? Galahads?—no, nor Percivales”
(For thus it pleased the King to range me close
After Sir Galahad); “nay,” said he, “but men
With strength and will to right the wrong’d, of power
To lay the sudden heads of violence flat,
Knights that in twelve great battles splash’d and
dyed

The strong White Horse in his own heathen blood—
But one hath seen, and all the blind will see.
Go, since your vows are sacred, being made :
Yet—for ye know the cries of all my realm
Pass thro' this hall—how often, O my knights,
Your places being vacant at my side,
This chance of noble deeds will come and go
Unchallenged, while ye follow wandering fires
Lost in the quagmire ! Many of you, yea most,
Return no more : ye think I show myself
Too dark a prophet : come now, let us meet
The morrow morn once more in one full field
Of gracious pastime, that once more the King,
Before ye leave him for this Quest, may count
The yet-unbroken strength of all his knights,
Rejoicing in that Order which he made.”

‘So when the sun broke next from under ground,
All the great table of our Arthur closed
And clash’d in such a tourney and so full,
So many lances broken—never yet
Had Camelot seen the like, since Arthur came ;
And I myself and Galahad, for a strength
Was in us from the vision, overthrew
So many knights that all the people cried,
And almost burst the barriers in their heat,
Shouting, “Sir Galahad and Sir Percivale !”

‘ But when the next day brake from under ground—
O brother, had you known our Camelot,
Built by old kings, age after age, so old
The King himself had fears that it would fall, •
So strange, and rich, and dim ; for where the roofs
Totter’d toward each other in the sky,
Met foreheads all along the street of those
Who watch’d us pass ; and lower, and where the long
Rich galleries, lady-laden, weigh’d the necks
Of dragons clinging to the crazy walls,
Thicker than drops from thunder, showers of flowers
Fell as we past ; and men and boys astride
On wyvern, lion, dragon, griffin, swan,
At all the corners, named us each by name,
Calling “ God speed ! ” but in the ways below
The knights and ladies wept, and rich and poor
Wept, and the King himself could hardly speak
For grief, and all in middle street the Queen,
Who rode by Lancelot, wail’d and shriek’d aloud,
“ This madness has come on us for our sins.”
So to the Gate of the three Queens we came,
Where Arthur’s wars are render’d mystically,
And thence departed every one his way.

‘ And I was lifted up in heart, and thought
Of all my late-shown prowess in the lists,
How my strong lance had beaten down the knights,

So many and famous names ; and never yet
Had heaven appear'd so blue, nor earth so green,
For all my blood danced in me, and I knew
That I should light upon the Holy Grail.

‘Thereafter, the dark warning of our King,
That most of us would follow wandering fires,
Came like a driving gloom across my mind.
Then every evil word I had spoken once,
And every evil thought I had thought of old,
And every evil deed I ever did,
Awoke and cried, “This Quest is not for thee.”
And lifting up mine eyes, I found myself
Alone, and in a land of sand and thorns,
And I was thirsty even unto death ;
And I, too, cried, “This Quest is not for thee.”

‘And on I rode, and when I thought my thirst
Would slay me, saw deep lawns, and then a brook,
With one sharp rapid, where the crisping white
Play’d ever back upon the sloping wave,
And took both ear and eye ; and o’er the brook
Were apple-trees, and apples by the brook
Fallen, and on the lawns. “I will rest here,”
I said, “I am not worthy of the Quest ;”
But even while I drank the brook, and ate
The goodly apples, all these things at once

Fell into dust, and I was left alone,
And thirsting, in a land of sand and thorns.

‘And then behold a woman at a door
Spinning ; and fair the house whereby she sat,
And kind the woman’s eyes and innocent,
And all her bearing gracious ; and she rose
Opening her arms to meet me, as who should say,
“Rest here ;” but when I touch’d her, lo ! she, too,
Fell into dust and nothing, and the house
Became no better than a broken shed,
And in it a dead babe ; and also this
Fell into dust, and I was left alone.

‘And on I rode, and greater was my thirst.
Then flash’d a yellow gleam across the world,
And where it smote the plowshare in the field,
The plowman left his plowing, and fell down
Before it ; where it glitter’d on her pail,
The milkmaid left her milking, and fell down
Before it, and I knew not why, but thought
“The sun is rising,” tho’ the sun had risen.
Then was I ware of one that on me moved
In golden armour with a crown of gold
About a casque all jewels ; and his horse
In golden armour jewell’d everywhere :
And on the splendour came, flashing me blind ;

And seem'd to me the Lord of all the world,
Being so huge. But when I thought he meant
To crush me, moving on me, lo ! he, too,
Open'd his arms to embrace me as he came,
And up I went and touch'd him, and he, too,
Fell into dust, and I was left alone
And wearying in a land of sand and thorns.

‘ And I rode on and found a mighty hill,
And on the top, a city wall'd : the spires
Prick'd with incredible pinnacles into heaven.
And by the gateway stirr'd a crowd ; and these
Cried to me climbing, “ Welcome, Percivale !
Thou mightiest and thou purest among men ! ”
And glad was I and clomb, but found at top
No man, nor any voice. And thence I past
Far thro' a ruinous city, and I saw
That man had once dwelt there ; but there I found
Only one man of an exceeding age.
“ Where is that goodly company,” said I,
“ That so cried out upon me ? ” and he had
Scarce any voice to answer, and yet gasp'd,
“ Whence and what art thou ? ” and even as he spoke
Fell into dust, and disappear'd, and I
Was left alone once more, and cried in grief,
“ Lo, if I find the Holy Grail itself
And touch it, it will crumble into dust.”

‘And thence I dropt into a lowly vale,
Low as the hill was high, and where the vale
Was lowest, found a chapel, and thereby
A holy hermit in a hermitage,
To whom I told my phantoms, and he said :

“O son, thou hast not true humility,
The highest virtue, mother of them all ;
For when the Lord of all things made Himself
Naked of glory for His mortal change,
‘Take thou my robe,’ she said, ‘for all is thine,’
And all her form shone forth with sudden light
So that the angels were amazed, and she
Follow’d Him down, and like a flying star
Led on the gray-hair’d wisdom of the east ;
But her thou hast not known : for what is this
Thou thoughtest of thy prowess and thy sins ?
Thou hast not lost thyself to save thyself
As Galahad.” When the hermit made an end,
In silver armour suddenly Galahad shone
Before us, and against the chapel door
Laid lance, and enter’d, and we knelt in prayer.
And there the hermit slaked my burning thirst,
And at the sacring of the mass I saw
The holy elements alone ; but he,
“Saw ye no more ? I, Galahad, saw the Grail,
The Holy Grail, descend upon the shrine :

I saw the fiery face as of a child
That smote itself into the bread, and went ;
And hither am I come ; and never yet
Hath what thy sister taught me first to see,
This Holy Thing, fail'd from my side, nor come
Cover'd, but moving with me night and day,
Fainter by day, but always in the night
Blood-red, and sliding down the blacken'd marsh
Blood-red, and on the naked mountain top
Blood-red, and in the sleeping mere below
Blood-red. And in the strength of this I rode,
Shattering all evil customs everywhere,
And past thro' Pagan realms, and made them mine,
And clash'd with Pagan hordes, and bore them down,
And broke thro' all, and in the strength of this
Come victor. But my time is hard at hand,
And hence I go ; and one will crown me king
Far in the spiritual city ; and come thou, too,
For thou shalt see the vision when I go."

‘ While thus he spake, his eye, dwelling on mine,
Drew me, with power upon me, till I grew
One with him, to believe as he believed.
Then, when the day began to wane, we went.

‘ There rose a hill that none but man could climb,
Scarr'd with a hundred wintry water-courses—

Storm at the top, and when we gain'd it, storm
Round us and death ; for every moment glanced
His silver arms and gloom'd : so quick and thick
The lightnings here and there to left and right
Struck, till the dry old trunks about us, dead,
Yea, rotten with a hundred years of death,
Sprang into fire : and at the base we found
On either hand, as far as eye could see,
A great black swamp and of an evil smell,
Part black, part whiten'd with the bones of men,
Not to be crost, save that some ancient king
Had built a way, where, link'd with many a bridge,
A thousand piers ran into the great Sea.
And Galahad fled along them bridge by bridge,
And every bridge as quickly as he crost
Sprang into fire and vanish'd, tho' I yearn'd
To follow ; and thrice above him all the heavens
Open'd and blazed with thunder such as seem'd
Shoutings of all the sons of God : and first
At once I saw him far on the great Sea,
In silver-shining armour starry-clear ;
And o'er his head the Holy Vessel hung
Clothed in white samite or a luminous cloud.
And with exceeding swiftness ran the boat,
If boat it were—I saw not whence it came.
And when the heavens open'd and blazed again
Roaring, I saw him like a silver star—

And had he set the sail, or had the boat
Become a living creature clad with wings?
And o'er his head the Holy Vessel hung
Redder than any rose, a joy to me,
For now I knew the veil had been withdrawn.
Then in a moment when they blazed again
Opening, I saw the least of little stars
Down on the waste, and straight beyond the star
I saw the spiritual city and all her spires
And gateways in a glory like one pearl—
No larger, tho' the goal of all the saints—
Strike from the sea; and from the star there shot
A rose-red sparkle to the city, and there
Dwelt, and I knew it was the Holy Grail,
Which never eyes on earth again shall see.
Then fell the floods of heaven drowning the deep.
And how my feet recrost the deathful ridge
No memory in me lives; but that I touch'd
The chapel-doors at dawn I know; and thence
Taking my war-horse from the holy man,
Glad that no phantom vexed me more, return'd
To whence I came, the gate of Arthur's wars.'

'O brother,' ask'd Ambrosius,—'for in sooth
These ancient books—and they would win thee—teem,
Only I find not there this Holy Grail,
With miracles and marvels like to these,

Not all unlike ; which oftentime I read,
Who read but on my breviary with ease,
Till my head swims ; and then go forth and pass
Down to the little thorpe that lies so close,
And almost plaster'd like a martin's nest
To these old walls—and mingle with our folk ;
And knowing every honest face of theirs
As well as ever shepherd knew his sheep,
And every homely secret in their hearts,
Delight myself with gossip and old wives,
And ills and aches, and teething, lyings-in,
And mirthful sayings, children of the place,
That have no meaning half a league away :
Or lulling random squabbles when they rise,
Chafferings and chatterings at the market-cross,
Rejoice, small man, in this small world of mine,
Yea, even in their hens and in their eggs—
O brother, saving this Sir Galahad,
Came ye on none but phantoms in your quest,
No man, no woman ?'

Then Sir Percivale :

'All men, to one so bound by such a vow,
And women were as phantoms. O, my brother,
Why wilt thou shame me to confess to thee
How far I falter'd from my quest and vow ?
For after I had lain so many nights,

A bedmate of the snail and eft and snake,
In grass and burdock, I was changed to wan
And meagre, and the vision had not come ;
And then I chanced upon a goodly town
With one great dwelling in the middle of it ;
Thither I made, and there was I disarm'd
By maidens each as fair as any flower :
But when they led me into hall, behold,
The Princess of that castle was the one,
Brother, and that one only, who had ever
Made my heart leap ; for when I moved of old
A slender page about her father's hall,
And she a slender maiden, all my heart
Went after her with longing : yet we twain
Had never kiss'd a kiss, or vow'd a vow.
And now I came upon her once again,
And one had wedded her, and he was dead,
And all his land and wealth and state were hers.
And while I tarried, every day she set
A banquet richer than the day before
By me ; for all her longing and her will
Was toward me as of old ; till one fair morn,
I walking to and fro beside a stream
That flash'd across her orchard underneath
Her castle-walls, she stole upon my walk,
And calling me the greatest of all knights,
Embraced me, and so kiss'd me the first time,

And gave herself and all her wealth to me.
Then I remember'd Arthur's warning word,
That most of us would follow wandering fires,
And the Quest faded in my heart. Anon,
The heads of all her people drew to me,
With supplication both of knees and tongue :
"We have heard of thee: thou art our greatest knight,
Our Lady says it, and we well believe :
Wed thou our Lady, and rule over us,
And thou shalt be as Arthur in our land."
O me, my brother ! but one night my vow
Burnt me within, so that I rose and fled,
But wail'd and wept, and hated mine own self,
And ev'n the Holy Quest, and all but her ;
Then after I was join'd with Galahad
Cared not for her, nor anything upon earth.'

Then said the monk, 'Poor men, when yule is
cold,
Must be content to sit by little fires.
And this am I, so that ye care for me
Ever so little ; yea, and blest be Heaven
That brought thee here to this poor house of ours
Where all the brethren are so hard, to warm
My cold heart with a friend : but O the pity
To find thine own first love once more—to hold,
Hold her a wealthy bride within thine arms,

Or all but hold, and then—cast her aside,
Foregoing all her sweetness, like a weed.
For we that want the warmth of double life,
We that are plagued with dreams of something sweet
Beyond all sweetness in a life so rich,—
Ah, blessed Lord, I speak too earthlywise,
Seeing I never stray'd beyond the cell,
But live like an old badger in his earth,
With earth about him everywhere, despite
All fast and penance. Saw ye none beside,
None of your knights?'

‘Yea so,’ said Percivale :

‘One night my pathway swerving east, I saw
The pelican on the casque of our Sir Bors
All in the middle of the rising moon :
And toward him spurr’d, and hail’d him, and he me,
And each made joy of either ; then he ask’d,
“Where is he? hast thou seen him—Lancelot?—

Once,”

Said good Sir Bors, “he dash’d across me—mad,
And maddening what he rode : and when I cried,
‘Ridest thou then so hotly on a quest
So holy,’ Lancelot shouted, ‘Stay me not !
I have been the sluggard, and I ride apace,
For now there is a lion in the way.’
So vanish’d.”

‘ Then Sir Bors had ridden on
Softly, and sorrowing for our Lancelot,
Because his former madness, once the talk
And scandal of our table, had return’d ;
For Lancelot’s kith and kin so worship him
That ill to him is ill to them ; to Bors
Beyond the rest : he well had been content
Not to have seen, so Lancelot might have seen,
The Holy Cup of healing ; and, indeed,
Being so clouded with his grief and love,
Small heart was his after the Holy Quest :
If God would send the vision, well : if not,
The Quest and he were in the hands of Heaven.

‘ And then, with small adventure met, Sir Bors
Rode to the lonest tract of all the realm,
And found a people there among their crags,
Our race and blood, a remnant that were left
Paynim amid their circles, and the stones
They pitch up straight to heaven : and their wise
men
Were strong in that old magic which can trace
The wandering of the stars, and scoff’d at him
And this high Quest as at a simple thing :
Told him he follow’d—almost Arthur’s words—
A mocking fire : “ what other fire than he,
Whereby the blood beats, and the blossom blows,

And the sea rolls, and all the world is warm'd?"
And when his answer chafed them, the rough crowd,
Hearing he had a difference with their priests,
Seized him, and bound and plunged him into a cell
Of great piled stones; and lying bounden there
In darkness thro' innumerable hours
He heard the hollow-ringing heaven sweep
Over him till by miracle—what else?—
Heavy as it was, a great stone slipt and fell,
Such as no wind could move: and thro' the gap
Glimmer'd the streaming scud: then came a night
Still as the day was loud; and thro' the gap
The seven clear stars of Arthur's Table Round—
For, brother, so one night, because they roll
Thro' such a round in heaven, we named the stars,
Rejoicing in ourselves and in our King—
And these, like bright eyes of familiar friends,
In on him shone: "And then to me, to me,"
Said good Sir Bors, "beyond all hopes of mine,
Who scarce had pray'd or ask'd it for myself—
Across the seven clear stars—O grace to me—
In colour like the fingers of a hand
Before a burning taper, the sweet Grail
Glided and past, and close upon it peal'd
A sharp quick thunder." Afterwards, a maid,
Who kept our holy faith among her kin
In secret, entering, loosed and let him go.'

To whom the monk : ‘ And I remember now
That pelican on the casque : Sir Bors it was
Who spake so low and sadly at our board ;
And mighty reverent at our grace was he :
A square-set man and honest ; and his eyes,
An out-door sign of all the warmth within,
Smiled with his lips—a smile beneath a cloud,
But heaven had meant it for a sunny one :
Ay, ay, Sir Bors, who else ? But when ye reach’d
The city, found ye all your knights return’d,
Or was there sooth in Arthur’s prophecy,
Tell me, and what said each, and what the King ?’

Then answer’d Percivale : ‘ And that can I,
Brother, and truly ; since the living words
Of so great men as Lancelot and our King
Pass not from door to door and out again,
But sit within the house. O, when we reach’d
The city, our horses stumbling as they trode
On heaps of ruin, hornless unicorns,
Crack’d basilisks, and splinter’d cockatrices,
And shatter’d talbots, which had left the stones
Raw, that they fell from, brought us to the hall.

‘ And there sat Arthur on the daïs-throne,
And those that had gone out upon the Quest,
Wasted and worn, and but a tithe of them,

And those that had not, stood before the King,
Who, when he saw me, rose, and bad me hail,
Saying, "A welfare in thine eye reproves
Our fear of some disastrous chance for thee
On hill, or plain, at sea, or flooding ford.
So fierce a gale made havoc here of late
Among the strange devices of our kings ;
Yea, shook this newer, stronger hall of ours,
And from the statue Merlin moulded for us
Half-wrench'd a golden wing ; but now—the Quest,
This vision—hast thou seen the Holy Cup,
That Joseph brought of old to Glastonbury ?"

‘So when I told him all thyself hast heard,
Ambrosius, and my fresh but fixt resolve
To pass away into the quiet life,
He answer'd not, but, sharply turning, ask'd
Of Gawain, "Gawain, was this Quest for thee?"

“Nay, lord,” said Gawain, “not for such as I.
Therefore I communed with a saintly man,
Who made me sure the Quest was not for me ;
For I was much awearied of the Quest :
But found a silk pavilion in a field,
And merry maidens in it ; and then this gale
Tore my pavilion from the tenting-pin,
And blew my merry maidens all about

With all discomfort ; yea, and but for this,
My twelvemonth and a day were pleasant to me."

'He ceased ; and Arthur turn'd to whom at first
He saw not, for Sir Bors, on entering, push'd
Athwart the throng to Lancelot, caught his hand,
Held it, and there, half-hidden by him, stood,
Until the King espied him, saying to him,
"Hail, Bors ! if ever loyal man and true
Could see it, thou hast seen the Grail ;" and Bors,
"Ask me not, for I may not speak of it :
I saw it ;" and the tears were in his eyes.

'Then there remain'd but Lancelot, for the rest
Spake but of sundry perils in the storm ;
Perhaps, like him of Cana in Holy Writ,
Our Arthur kept his best until the last ;
"Thou, too, my Lancelot," ask'd the King, "my friend,
Our mightiest, hath this Quest avail'd for thee ?"

"Our mightiest !" answer'd Lancelot, with a groan ;
"O King !"—and when he paused, methought I spied
A dying fire of madness in his eyes—
"O King, my friend, if friend of thine I be,
Happier are those that welter in their sin,
Swine in the mud, that cannot see for slime,
Slime of the ditch : but in me lived a sin

So strange, of such a kind, that all of pure,
Noble, and knightly in me twined and clung
Round that one sin, until the wholesome flower
And poisonous grew together, each as each,
Not to be pluck'd asunder ; and when thy knights
Sware, I sware with them only in the hope
That could I touch or see the Holy Grail
They might be pluck'd asunder. Then I spake
To one most holy saint, who wept and said,
That save they could be pluck'd asunder, all
My quest were but in vain ; to whom I vow'd
That I would work according as he will'd.
And forth I went, and while I yearn'd and strove
To tear the twain asunder in my heart,
My madness came upon me as of old,
And whipt me into waste fields far away ;
There was I beaten down by little men,
Mean knights, to whom the moving of my sword
And shadow of my spear had been enow
To scare them from me once ; and then I came
All in my folly to the naked shore,
Wide flats, where nothing but coarse grasses grew ;
But such a blast, my King, began to blow,
So loud a blast along the shore and sea,
Ye could not hear the waters for the blast,
Tho' heapt in mounds and ridges all the sea
Drove like a cataract, and all the sand

Swept like a river, and the clouded heavens
Were shaken with the motion and the sound.
And blackening in the sea-foam sway'd a boat,
Half-swallow'd in it, anchor'd with a chain ;
And in my madness to myself I said,
' I will embark and I will lose myself, |
And in the great sea wash away my sin.'
I burst the chain, I sprang into the boat.
Seven days I drove along the dreary deep,
And with me drove the moon and all the stars ;
And the wind fell, and on the seventh night
I heard the shingle grinding in the surge,
And felt the boat shock earth, and looking up,
Behold, the enchanted towers of Carbonek,
A castle like a rock upon a rock,
With chasm-like portals open to the sea,
And steps that met the breaker ! there was none
Stood near it but a lion on each side
That kept the entry, and the moon was full.
Then from the boat I leapt, and up the stairs.
There drew my sword. With sudden-flaring manes
Those two great beasts rose upright like a man,
Each gript a shoulder, and I stood between ;
And, when I would have smitten them, heard a
voice,
' Doubt not, go forward ; if thou doubt, the beasts
Will tear thee piecemeal.' Then with violence

The sword was dash'd from out my hand, and fell.
And up into the sounding hall I past ;
But nothing in the sounding hall I saw,
No bench nor table, painting on the wall
Or shield of knight ; only the rounded moon
Thro' the tall oriel on the rolling sea.
But always in the quiet house I heard,
Clear as a lark, high o'er me as a lark,
A sweet voice singing in the topmost tower
'To the eastward : up I climb'd a thousand steps
With pain : as in a dream I seem'd to climb
For ever : at the last I reach'd a door,
A light was in the crannies, and I heard,
'Glory and joy and honour to our Lord
And to the Holy Vessel of the Grail.'
Then in my madness I essay'd the door ;
It gave ; and thro' a stormy glare, a heat
As from a seventimes-heated furnace, I,
Blasted and burnt, and blinded as I was,
With such a fierceness that I swoon'd away—
O, yet methought I saw the Holy Grail,
All pall'd in crimson samite, and around
Great angels, awful shapes, and wings and eyes.
And but for all my madness and my sin,
And then my swooning, I had sworn I saw
That which I saw ; but what I saw was veil'd
And cover'd ; and this Quest was not for me."

‘So speaking, and here ceasing, Lancelot left
The hall long silent, till Sir Gawain—nay,
Brother, I need not tell thee foolish words,—
A reckless and irreverent knight was he,
Now bolden’d by the silence of his King,—
Well, I will tell thee: “O King, my liege,” he
said,

“Hath Gawain fail’d in any quest of thine?
When have I stinted stroke in foughten field?
But as for thine, my good friend Percivale,
Thy holy nun and thou have driven men mad,
Yea, made our mightiest madder than our least.
But by mine eyes and by mine ears I swear,
I will be deafer than the blue-eyed cat,
And thrice as blind as any noonday owl,
To holy virgins in their ecstasies,
Henceforward.”

““Deafer,” said the blameless King,
“Gawain, and blinder unto holy things
Hope not to make thyself by idle vows,
Being too blind to have desire to see.
But if indeed there came a sign from heaven,
Blessed are Bors, Lancelot and Percivale,
For these have seen according to their sight.
For every fiery prophet in old times,
And all the sacred madness of the bard,

When God made music thro' them, could but speak
His music by the framework and the chord ;
And as ye saw it ye have spoken truth.

“Nay—but thou errest, Lancelot : never yet
Could all of true and noble in knight and man
Twine round one sin, whatever it might be,
With such a closeness, but apart there grew,
Save that he were the swine thou spakest of,
Some root of knighthood and pure nobleness ;
Whereto see thou, that it may bear its flower.

“And spake I not too truly, O my knights ?
Was I too dark a prophet when I said
To those who went upon the Holy Quest,
That most of them would follow wandering fires,
Lost in the quagmire ?—lost to me and gone,
And left me gazing at a barren board,
And a lean Order—scarce return'd a tithe—
And out of those to whom the vision came
My greatest hardly will believe he saw ;
Another hath beheld it afar off,
And leaving human wrongs to right themselves,
Cares but to pass into the silent life.
And one hath had the vision face to face,
And now his chair desires him here in vain,
However they may crown him elsewhere.

“And some among you held, that if the King
Had seen the sight he would have sworn the vow :
Not easily, seeing that the King must guard
That which he rules, and is but as the hind
To whom a space of land is given to plow.
Who may not wander from the allotted field
Before his work be done ; but, being done,
Let visions of the night or of the day
Come, as they will ; and many a time they come,
Until this earth he walks on seems not earth,
This light that strikes his eyeball is not light,
This air that smites his forehead is not air
But vision—yea, his very hand and foot—
In moments when he feels he cannot die,
And knows himself no vision to himself,
Nor the high God a vision, nor that One
Who rose again : ye have seen what ye have seen.”

‘So spake the King : I knew not all he meant.’

RECOLLECTIONS OF THE
ARABIAN NIGHTS.

WHEN the breeze of a joyful dawn blew free
In the silken sail of infancy,
The tide of time flow'd back with me,
 The forward-flowing tide of time ;
And many a sheeny summer-morn,
Adown the Tigris I was borne,
By Bagdat's shrines of fretted gold,
High-walled gardens green and old ;
True Mussulman was I and sworn,
 For it was in the golden prime
 Of good Haroun Alraschid.

Anight my shallop, rustling thro'
The low and bloomed foliage, drove
The fragrant, glistening deeps, and clove
The citron-shadows in the blue :
By garden porches on the brim,
The costly doors flung open wide,

Gold glittering thro' lamplight dim,
And broider'd sofas on each side :
 In sooth it was a goodly time,
 For it was in the golden prime
 Of good Haroun Alraschid.

Often where clear-stemm'd platans guard
The outlet, did I turn away
The boat-head down a broad canal
From the main river sluiced, where all
The sloping of the moon-lit sward
Was damask-work, and deep inlay
Of braided blooms unmown, which crept
Adown to where the water slept.
 A goodly place, a goodly time,
 For it was in the golden prime
 Of good Haroun Alraschid.

A motion from the river won
Ridged the smooth level, bearing on
My shallop thro' the star-strown calm,
Until another night in night
I enter'd, from the clearer light,
Imbower'd vaults of pillar'd palm,
Imprisoning sweets, which, as they clomb
Heavenward, were stay'd beneath the dome

Of hollow boughs.—A goodly time,
For it was in the golden prime
Of good Haroun Alraschid.

Still onward ; and the clear canal
Is rounded to as clear a lake.
From the green rivage many a fall
Of diamond rillets musical,
Thro' little crystal arches low
Down from the central fountain's flow
Fall'n silver-chiming, seemed to shake
The sparkling flints beneath the prow.
A goodly place, a goodly time,
For it was in the golden prime
Of good Haroun Alraschid.

Above thro' many a bowery turn
A walk with vary-colour'd shells
Wander'd engrain'd. On either side
All round about the fragrant marge
From fluted vase, and brazen urn
In order, eastern flowers large,
Some dropping low their crimson bells
Half-closed, and others studded wide
With disks and tiars, fed the time
With odour in the golden prime
Of good Haroun Alraschid.

Far off, and where the lemon grove
In closest coverture upsprung,
The living airs of middle night
Died round the bulbul as he sung ;
Not he : but something which possess'd
The darkness of the world, delight,
Life, anguish, death, immortal love,
Ceasing not, mingled, unrepress'd,
 Apart from place, withholding time,
 But flattering the golden prime
 Of good Haroun Alraschid.

Black the garden-bowers and grotts
Slumber'd : the solemn palms were ranged
Above, unwoo'd of summer wind :
A sudden splendour from behind
Flush'd all the leaves with rich gold-green,
And, flowing rapidly between
Their interspaces, counterchanged
The level lake with diamond-plots
 Of dark and bright. A lovely time,
 For it was in the golden prime
 Of good Haroun Alraschid.

Dark-blue the deep sphere overhead,
Distinct with vivid stars inlaid,
Grew darker from that under-flame :

So, leaping lightly from the boat,
With silver anchor left afloat,
In marvel whence that glory came
Upon me, as in sleep I sank
In cool soft turf upon the bank,
 Entranced with that place and time,
 So worthy of the golden prime
 Of good Haroun Alraschid.

Thence thro' the garden I was drawn—
A realm of pleasance, many a mound,
And many a shadow-chequer'd lawn
Full of the city's stilly sound,
And deep myrrh-thickets blowing round
The stately cedar, tamarisks,
Thick rosaries of scented thorn,
Tall orient shrubs, and obelisks
 Graven with emblems of the time,
 In honour of the golden prime
 Of good Haroun Alraschid.

With dazed vision unawares
From the long alley's latticed shade
Emerged, I came upon the great
Pavilion of the Caliphat.
Right to the carven cedarn doors,
Flung inward over spangled floors,

Broad-based flights of marble stairs
Ran up with golden balustrade,
After the fashion of the time,
And humour of the golden prime
Of good Haroun Alraschid.

The fourscore windows all alight
As with the quintessence of flame,
A million tapers flaring bright
From twisted silvers look'd to shame
The hollow-vaulted dark, and stream'd
Upon the mooned domes aloof
In inmost Bagdat, till there seem'd
Hundreds of crescents on the roof
Of night new-risen, that marvellous time
To celebrate the golden prime
Of good Haroun Alraschid.

Then stole I up, and trancedly
Gazed on the Persian girl alone,
Serene with argent-lidded eyes
Amorous, and lashes like to rays
Of darkness, and a brow of pearl
Tressed with redolent ebony,
In many a dark delicious curl,
Flowing beneath her rose-hued zone ;

The sweetest lady of the time,
Well worthy of the golden prime
Of good Haroun Alraschid.

Six columns, three on either side,
Pure silver, underpropt a rich
Throne of the massive ore, from which
Down-droop'd, in many a floating fold,
Engarlanded and diaper'd
With inwrought flowers, a cloth of gold.
Thereon, his deep eye laughter-stirr'd
With merriment of kingly pride,
Sole star of all that place and time,
I saw him—in his golden prime,
THE GOOD HAROUN ALRASCHID.

THE POET.

THE poet in a golden clime was born,
 With golden stars above ;
Dower'd with the hate of hate, the scorn of scorn,
 The love of love.

He saw thro' life and death, thro' good and ill,
 He saw thro' his own soul.
The marvel of the everlasting will,
 An open scroll,

Before him lay : with echoing feet he threaded
 The secretest walks of fame :
The viewless arrows of his thoughts were headed
 And wing'd with flame,

Like Indian reeds blown from his silver tongue,
 And of so fierce a flight,
From Calpe unto Caucasus they sung,
 Filling with light

And vagrant melodies the winds which bore
 Them earthward till they lit ;
Then, like the arrow-seeds of the field flower,
 The fruitful wit

Cleaving, took root, and springing forth anew
 Where'er they fell, behold,
Like to the mother plant in semblance, grew
 A flower all gold,

And bravely furnish'd all abroad to fling
 The winged shafts of truth,
To throng with stately blooms the breathing
 spring
 Of Hope and Youth.

So many minds did gird their orbs with beams,
 Tho' one did fling the fire.
Heaven flow'd upon the soul in many dreams
 Of high desire.

Thus truth was multiplied on truth, the world
 Like one great garden show'd,
And thro' the wreaths of floating dark upcurl'd
 Rare sunrise flow'd.

And Freedom rear'd in that august sunrise
Her beautiful bold brow,
When rites and forms before his burning eyes
Melted like snow.

There was no blood upon her maiden robes
Sunn'd by those orient skies ;
But round about the circles of the globes
Of her keen eyes

And in her raiment's hem was traced in flame
WISDOM, a name to shake
All evil dreams of power—a sacred name.
And when she spake,

Her words did gather thunder as they ran,
And as the lightning to the thunder
Which follows it, riving the spirit of man,
Making earth wonder,

So was their meaning to her words. No sword
Of wrath her right arm whirl'd,
But one poor poet's scroll, and with *his* word
She shook the world.

THE LADY OF SHALOTT.

PART I.

ON either side the river lie
Long fields of barley and of rye,
That clothe the wold and meet the sky ;
And thro' the field the road runs by
 To many-tower'd Camelot ;
And up and down the people go,
Gazing where the lilies blow
Round an island there below,
 The island of Shalott.

Willows whiten, aspens quiver,
Little breezes dusk and shiver
Thro' the wave that runs for ever
By the island in the river
 Flowing down to Camelot.
Four gray walls, and four gray towers,
Overlook a space of flowers,
And the silent isle imbowers
 The Lady of Shalott.

By the margin, willow-veil'd,
Slide the heavy barges trail'd
By slow horses ; and unhail'd
The shallop flitteth silken-sail'd
 Skimming down to Camelot :
But who hath seen her wave her hand ?
Or at the casement seen her stand ?
Or is she known in all the land,
 The Lady of Shalott ?

Only reapers, reaping early
In among the bearded barley,
Hear a song that echoes cheerly
From the river winding clearly,
 Down to tower'd Camelot :
And by the moon the reaper weary,
Piling sheaves in uplands airy,
Listening, whispers ' 'Tis the fairy
 Lady of Shalott.'

PART II.

THERE she weaves by night and day
A magic web with colours gay.
She has heard a whisper say,
A curse is on her if she stay
 To look down to Camelot.

She knows not what the curse may be,
And so she weaveth steadily,
And little other care hath she,
The Lady of Shalott.

And moving thro' a mirror clear
That hangs before her all the year,
Shadows of the world appear.
There she sees the highway near
Winding down to Camelot :
There the river eddy whirls,
And there the surly village-churls,
And the red cloaks of market girls,
Pass onward from Shalott.

Sometimes a troop of damsels glad,
An abbot on an ambling pad,
Sometimes a curly shepherd-lad,
Or long-hair'd page in crimson clad,
Goes by to tower'd Camelot ;
And sometimes thro' the mirror blue
The knights come riding two and two :
She hath no loyal knight and true,
The Lady of Shalott.

But in her web she still delights
To weave the mirror's magic sights,

For often thro' the silent nights
A funeral, with plumes and lights
And music, went to Camelot :
Or when the moon was overhead,
Came two young lovers lately wed ;
'I am half sick of shadows,' said
The Lady of Shalott.

PART III.

A BOW-SHOT from her bower-eaves,
He rode between the barley-sheaves,
The sun came dazzling thro' the leaves,
And flamed upon the brazen greaves
Of bold Sir Lancelot.
A red-cross knight for ever kneel'd
To a lady in his shield,
That sparkled on the yellow field,
Beside remote Shalott.

The gemmy bridle glitter'd free,
Like to some branch of stars we see
Hung in the golden Galaxy.
The bridle bells rang merrily
As he rode down to Camelot :
And from his blazon'd baldric slung
A mighty silver bugle hung,

And as he rode his armour rung,
Beside remote Shalott.

All in the blue unclouded weather
Thick-jewell'd shone the saddle-leather,
The helmet and the helmet-feather
Burn'd like one burning flame together,
As he rode down to Camelot.
As often thro' the purple night,
Below the starry clusters bright,
Some bearded meteor, trailing light,
Moves over still Shalott.

His broad clear brow in sunlight glow'd ;
On burnish'd hooves his war-horse trode ;
From underneath his helmet flow'd
His coal-black curls as on he rode,
As he rode down to Camelot.
From the bank and from the river
He flash'd into the crystal mirror,
'Tirra lirra,' by the river
Sang Sir Lancelot.

She left the web, she left the loom,
She made three paces thro' the room,
She saw the water-lily bloom,
She saw the helmet and the plume,
She look'd down to Camelot.

Out flew the web and floated wide ;
The mirror crack'd from side to side ;
'The curse is come upon me,' cried
 The Lady of Shalott.

PART IV.

IN the stormy east-wind straining,
The pale yellow woods were waning,
The broad stream in his banks complaining,
Heavily the low sky raining
 Over tower'd Camelot ;
Down she came and found a boat
Beneath a willow left afloat,
And round about the prow she wrote
 The Lady of Shalott.

And down the river's dim expanse
Like some bold seër in a trance,
Seeing all his own mischance—
With a glassy countenance
 Did she look to Camelot.
And at the closing of the day
She loosed the chain, and down she lay ;
The broad stream bore her far away,
 The Lady of Shalott.

Lying, robed in snowy white
That loosely flew to left and right—
The leaves upon her falling light—
Thro' the noises of the night

She floated down to Camelot :
And as the boat-head wound along
The willowy hills and fields among,
They heard her singing her last song,
The Lady of Shalott.

Heard a carol, mournful, holy,
Chanted loudly, chanted lowly,
Till her blood was frozen slowly,
And her eyes were darken'd wholly,
Turn'd to tower'd Camelot.
For ere she reach'd upon the tide
The first house by the water-side,
Singing in her song she died,
The Lady of Shalott.

Under tower and balcony,
By garden-wall and gallery,
A gleaming shape she floated by,
Dead-pale between the houses high,
Silent into Camelot.

Out upon the wharfs they came,
Knight and burgher, lord and dame,
And round the prow they read her name,
The Lady of Shalott.

Who is this? and what is here?
And in the lighted palace near
Died the sound of royal cheer;
And they cross'd themselves for fear,
All the knights at Camelot:
But Lancelot mused a little space;
He said, 'She has a lovely face;
God in his mercy lend her grace,
The Lady of Shalott.'

THE LOTOS-EATERS.

‘COURAGE!’ he said, and pointed toward the land,
‘This mounting wave will roll us shoreward soon.’

In the afternoon they came unto a land

In which it seemed always afternoon.

All round the coast the languid air did swoon,

Breathing like one that hath a weary dream.

Full-faced above the valley stood the moon ;

And like a downward smoke, the slender stream

Along the cliff to fall and pause and fall did seem.

A land of streams ! some, like a downward smoke,
Slow-dropping veils of thinnest lawn, did go ;

And some thro’ wavering lights and shadows broke,
Rolling a slumbrous sheet of foam below.

They saw the gleaming river seaward flow

From the inner land : far off, three mountain-tops,

Three silent pinnacles of aged snow,

Stood sunset-flush'd : and, dew'd with showery drops,
Up-clomb the shadowy pine above the woven copse.

The charmed sunset linger'd low adown
In the red West : thro' mountain clefts the dale
Was seen far inland, and the yellow down
Border'd with palm, and many a winding vale
And meadow, set with slender galingale ;
A land where all things always seem'd the same !
And round about the keel with faces pale,
Dark faces pale against that rosy flame,
The mild-eyed melancholy Lotos-eaters came.

Branches they bore of that enchanted stem,
Laden with flower and fruit, whereof they gave
To each, but whoso did receive of them,
And taste, to him the gushing of the wave
Far far away did seem to mourn and rave
On alien shores ; and if his fellow spake,
His voice was thin, as voices from the grave ;
And deep-asleep he seem'd, yet all awake,
And music in his ears his beating heart did make

They sat them down upon the yellow sand,
Between the sun and moon upon the shore ;
And sweet it was to dream of Fatherland,
Of child, and wife, and slave ; but `evermore

Most weary seem'd the sea, weary the oar,
Weary the wandering fields of barren foam.
Then some one said, 'We will return no more ;'
And all at once they sang, 'Our island home
Is far beyond the wave ; we will no longer roam.'

CHORIC SONG.

I.

THERE is sweet music here that softer falls
Than petals from blown roses on the grass,
Or night-dews on still waters between walls
Of shadowy granite, in a gleaming pass ;
Music that gentlier on the spirit lies,
Than tir'd eyelids upon tir'd eyes ;
Music that brings sweet sleep down from the
blissful skies.

Here are cool mosses deep,
And thro' the moss the ivies creep,
And in the stream the long-leaved flowers weep,
And from the craggy ledge the poppy hangs in
sleep.

II.

Why are we weigh'd upon with heaviness,
And utterly consumed with sharp distress,
While all things else have rest from weariness ?

All things have rest : why should we toil alone,
We only toil, who are the first of things,
And make perpetual moan,
Still from one sorrow to another thrown :
Nor ever fold our wings,
And cease from wanderings,
Nor steep our brows in slumber's holy balm ;
Nor harken what the inner spirit sings,
'There is no joy but calm !'
Why should we only toil, the roof and crown of
things ?

III.

Lo ! in the middle of the wood,
The folded leaf is woo'd from out the bud
With winds upon the branch, and there
Grows green and broad, and takes no care,
Sun-steep'd at noon, and in the moon
Nightly dew-fed ; and turning yellow
Falls, and floats adown the air.
Lo ! sweeten'd with the summer light,
The full-juiced apple, waxing over-mellow,
Drops in a silent autumn night.
All its allotted length of days,
The flower ripens in its place,
Ripens and fades, and falls, and hath no toil,
Fast-rooted in the fruitful soil.

IV.

Hateful is the dark-blue sky,
Vaulted o'er the dark-blue sea.
Death is the end of life ; ah, why
Should life all labour be ?
Let us alone. Time driveth onward fast,
And in a little while our lips are dumb.
Let us alone. What is it that will last ?
All things are taken from us, and become
Portions and parcels of the dreadful Past.
Let us alone. What pleasure can we have
To war with evil ? Is there any peace
In ever climbing up the climbing wave ?
All things have rest, and ripen toward the grave
In silence ; ripen, fall and cease :
Give us long rest or death, dark death, or dreamful
ease.

V.

How sweet it were, hearing the downward stream,
With half-shut eyes ever to seem
Falling asleep in a half-dream !
To dream and dream, like yonder amber light,
Which will not leave the myrrh-bush on the height ;
To hear each other's whisper'd speech ;
Eating the Lotos day by day,

To watch the crisping ripples on the beach,
And tender curving lines of creamy spray ;
To lend our hearts and spirits wholly
To the influence of mild-minded melancholy ;
To muse and brood and live again in memory,
With those old faces of our infancy
Heap'd over with a mound of grass,
Two handfuls of white dust, shut in an urn of brass !

VI.

Dear is the memory of our wedded lives,
And dear the last embraces of our wives
And their warm tears : but all hath suffer'd change :
For surely now our household hearths are cold :
Our sons inherit us : our looks are strange :
And we should come like ghosts to trouble joy.
Or else the island princes over-bold
Have eat our substance, and the minstrel sings
Before them of the ten years' war in Troy,
And our great deeds, as half-forgotten things.
Is there confusion in the little isle ?
Let what is broken so remain.
The Gods are hard to reconcile :
'Tis hard to settle order once again.
There *is* confusion worse than death,
Trouble on trouble, pain on pain,

Long labour unto aged breath,
Sore task to hearts worn out by many wars
And eyes grown dim with gazing on the pilot-stars.

VII.

But, propt on beds of amaranth and moly,
How sweet (while warm airs lull us, blowing lowly)
With half-dropt eyelid still,
Beneath a heaven dark and holy,
To watch the long bright river drawing slowly
His waters from the purple hill—
To hear the dewy echoes calling
From cave to cave thro' the thick-twined vine—
To watch the emerald-colour'd water falling
Thro' many a wov'n acanthus-wreath divine !
Only to hear and see the far-off sparkling brine,
Only to hear were sweet, stretch'd out beneath the
 pine.

VIII.

The Lotos blooms below the barren peak :
The Lotos blows by every winding creek :
All day the wind breathes low with mellower tone :
Thro' every hollow cave and alley lone
Round and round the spicy downs the yellow Lotos-
 dust is blown.

We have had enough of action, and of motion we,
Roll'd to starboard, roll'd to larboard, when the surge
was seething free,

Where the wallowing monster spouted his foam-
fountains in the sea.

Let us swear an oath, and keep it with an equal mind,
In the hollow Lotos-land to live and lie reclined
On the hills like Gods together, careless of mankind.
For they lie beside their nectar, and the bolts are
hurl'd

Far below them in the valleys, and the clouds are
lightly curl'd

Round their golden houses, girdled with the gleaming
world :

Where they smile in secret, looking over wasted lands,
Blight and famine, plague and earthquake, roaring
deeps and fiery sands,

Clanging fights, and flaming towns, and sinking ships,
and praying hands.

But they smile, they find a music centred in a doleful
song

Steaming up, a lamentation and an ancient tale of wrong,
Like a tale of little meaning tho' the words are strong;
Chanted from an ill-used race of men that cleave the
soil,

Sow the seed, and reap the harvest with enduring toil,
Storing yearly little dues of wheat, and wine and oil ;

Till they perish and they suffer—some, 'tis whisper'd—
down in hell

Suffer endless anguish, others in Elysian valleys dwell,
Resting weary limbs at last on beds of asphodel.

Surely, surely, slumber is more sweet than toil, the
shore

Than labour in the deep mid-ocean, wind and wave
and oar ;

Oh rest ye, brother mariners, we will not wander more.

THE DAY-DREAM.

PROLOGUE.

O LADY FLORA, let me speak :
A pleasant hour has passed away
While, dreaming on your damask cheek,
The dewy sister-eyelids lay.
As by the lattice you reclined,
I went thro' many wayward moods
To see you dreaming—and, behind,
A summer crisp with shining woods.
And I too dream'd, until at last
Across my fancy, brooding warm,
The reflex of a legend past,
And loosely settled into form.
And would you have the thought I had,
And see the vision that I saw,
Then take the broidery-frame, and add
A crimson to the quaint Macaw,
And I will tell it. Turn your face,
Nor look with that too-earnest eye—
The rhymes are dazzled from their place,
And order'd words asunder fly.

THE SLEEPING PALACE.

I.

THE varying year with blade and sheaf
Clothes and reclothes the happy plains,
Here rests the sap within the leaf,
Here stays the blood along the veins.
Faint shadows, vapours lightly curl'd,
Faint murmurs from the meadows come,
Like hints and echoes of the world
To spirits folded in the womb.

II.

Soft lustre bathes the range of urns
On every slanting terrace-lawn.
The fountain to his place returns
Deep in the garden lake withdrawn.
Here droops the banner on the tower,
On the hall-hearths the festal fires,
The peacock in his laurel bower,
The parrot in his gilded wires.

. III.

Roof-haunting martins warm their eggs :
In these, in those the life is stay'd.
The mantles from the golden pegs
Droop sleepily : no sound is made,
Not even of a gnat that sings.
More like a picture seemeth all
Than those old portraits of old kings,
That watch the sleepers from the wall.

IV.

Here sits the Butler with a flask
Between his knees, half-drain'd ; and there
The wrinkled steward at his task,
The maid-of-honour blooming fair ;
The page has caught her hand in his :
Her lips are sever'd as to speak :
His own are pouted to a kiss :
The blush is fix'd upon her cheek.

V.

Till all the hundred summers pass,
The beams, that thro' the Oriel shine,
Make prisms in every carven glass,
And beaker brimm'd with noble wine.

Each baron at the banquet sleeps,
 Grave faces gather'd in a ring.
His state the king reposing keeps.
 He must have been a jovial king.

VI.

All round a hedge upshoots, and shows
 At distance like a little wood ;
Thorns, ivies, woodbine, mistletoes,
 And grapes with bunches red as blood ;
All creeping plants, a wall of green
 Close-matted, bur and brake and briar,
And glimpsing over these, just seen,
 High up, the topmost palace spire.

VII.

When will the hundred summers die,
 And thought and time be born again,
And newer knowledge, drawing nigh,
 Bring truth that sways the soul of men ?
Here all things in their place remain,
 As all were order'd, ages since.
Come, Care and Pleasure, Hope and Pain,
 And bring the fated fairy Prince.

THE SLEEPING BEAUTY.

I.

YEAR after year unto her feet,
 She lying on her couch alone,
Across the purple coverlet, .
 The maiden's jet-black hair has grown,
On either side her tranced form
 Forth streaming from a braid of pearl :
The slumbrous light is rich and warm,
 And moves not on the rounded curl.

II.

The silk star-broider'd coverlid
 Unto her limbs itself doth mould
Languidly ever ; and, amid
 Her full black ringlets downward roll'd,
Glow forth each softly-shadow'd arm
 With bracelets of the diamond bright :
Her constant beauty doth inform
 Stillness with love, and day with light.

III.

She sleeps : her breathings are not heard

 In palace chambers far apart.

The fragrant tresses are not stirr'd

 That lie upon her charmed heart.

She sleeps : on either hand upswells

 The gold-fringed pillow lightly prest :

She sleeps, nor dreams, but ever dwells

 A perfect form in perfect rest.

THE ARRIVAL.

I.

ALL precious things, discover'd late,
To those that seek them issue forth ;
For love in sequel works with fate,
And draws the veil from hidden worth.
He travels far from other skies—
His mantle glitters on the rocks—
A fairy Prince, with joyful eyes,
And lighter-footed than the fox.

II.

The bodies and the bones of those
That strove in other days to pass,
Are wither'd in the thorny close,
Or scatter'd blanching on the grass.
He gazes on the silent dead :
'They perish'd in their daring deeds.'
This proverb flashes thro' his head,
'The many fail : the one succeeds.'

III.

He comes, scarce knowing what he seeks :

He breaks the hedge : he enters there :

The colour flies into his cheeks :

He trusts to light on something fair ;

For all his life the charm did talk

About his path, and hover near

With words of promise in his walk,

And whisper'd voices at his ear.

IV.

More close and close his footsteps wind :

The Magic Music in his heart

Beats quick and quicker, till he find

The quiet chamber far apart.

His spirit flutters like a lark,

He stoops—to kiss her—on his knee.

'Love, if thy tresses be so dark,

How dark those hidden eyes must be !'

THE REVIVAL.

I.

A TOUCH, a kiss ! the charm was snapt.
There rose a noise of striking clocks,
And feet that ran, and doors that clapt,
And barking dogs, and crowing cocks ;
A fuller light illumined all,
A breeze thro' all the garden swept,
A sudden hubbub shook the hall,
And sixty feet the fountain leapt.

II.

The hedge broke in, the banner blew,
The butler drank, the steward scrawl'd,
The fire shot up, the martin flew,
The parrot scream'd, the peacock squall'd,
The maid and page renew'd their strife,
The palace bang'd, and buzz'd and clackt,
And all the long-pent stream of life
Dash'd downward in a cataract.

III.

And last with these the king awoke,
And in his chair himself uprear'd,
And yawn'd, and rubb'd his face, and spoke,
‘By holy rood, a royal beard !
How say you ? we have slept, my lords.
My beard has grown into my lap.’
The barons swore, with many words,
‘Twas but an after-dinner’s nap.

IV.

‘Pardy,’ return’d the king, ‘but still
My joints are somewhat stiff or so.
My lord, and shall we pass the bill
I mention’d half an hour ago ?’
The chancellor, sedate and vain,
In courteous words return’d reply :
But dallied with his golden chain,
And, smiling, put the question by.

THE DEPARTURE.

I.

AND on her lover's arm she leant,
And round her waist she felt it fold,
And far across the hills they went
In that new world which is the old :
Across the hills, and far away
Beyond their utmost purple rim,
And deep into the dying day
The happy princess follow'd him.

II.

'I'd sleep another hundred years,
O love, for such another kiss ;'
'O wake for ever, love,' she hears,
'O love, 'twas such as this and this.'
And o'er them many a sliding star,
And many a merry wind was borne,
And, stream'd thro' many a golden bar,
The twilight melted into morn.

III.

‘O eyes long laid in happy sleep!’
 ‘O happy sleep, that lightly fled!’
‘O happy kiss, that woke thy sleep!’
 ‘O love, thy kiss would wake the dead!’
And o’er them many a flowing range
 Of vapour buoy’d the crescent-bark,
And, rapt thro’ many a rosy change,
 The twilight died into the dark.

IV.

‘A hundred summers! can it be?
 And whither goest thou, tell me where?’
‘O seek my father’s court with me,
 For there are greater wonders there.’
And o’er the hills, and far away
 Beyond their utmost purple rim,
Beyond the night, across the day,
 ‘Thro’ all the world she follow’d him.

MORAL.

I.

So, Lady Flora, take my lay,
And if you find no moral there,
Go, look in any glass and say,
What moral is in being fair.
Oh, to what uses shall we put
The wildweed-flower that simply blows?
And is there any moral shut
Within the bosom of the rose?

II.

But any man that walks the mead,
In bud or blade, or bloom, may find,
According as his humours lead,
A meaning suited to his mind.
And liberal applications lie
In Art like Nature, dearest friend;
So 'twere to cramp its use, if I
Should hook it to some useful end.

L'ENVOI.

I.

You shake your head. A random string
Your finer female sense offends.
Well—were it not a pleasant thing
To fall asleep with all one's friends ;
To pass with all our social ties
To silence from the paths of men ;
And every hundred years to rise
And learn the world, and sleep again ;
To sleep thro' terms of mighty wars,
And wake on science grown to more,
On secrets of the brain, the stars,
As wild as aught of fairy lore ;
And all that else the years will show,
The Poet-forms of stronger hours,
The vast Republics that may grow,
The Federations and the Powers ;
Titanic forces taking birth
In divers seasons, divers climes ;

For we are Ancients of the earth,
And in the morning of the times.

II.

So sleeping, so aroused from sleep
Thro' sunny decads new and strange,
Or gay quinquenniads would we reap
The flower and quintessence of change.

III.

Ah, yet would I—and would I might !
So much your eyes my fancy take—
Be still the first to leap to light
That I might kiss those eyes awake !
For, am I right, or am I wrong,
To choose your own you did not care ;
You'd have *my* moral from the song,
And I will take my pleasure there :
And, am I right or am I wrong,
My fancy, ranging thro' and thro',
To search a meaning for the song,
Perforce will still revert to you ;
Nor finds a closer truth than this
All-graceful head, so richly curl'd,
And evermore a costly kiss
The prelude to some brighter world.

IV.

For since the time when Adam first
Embraced his Eve in happy hour,
And every bird of Eden burst
In carol, every bud to flower,
What eyes, like thine, have waken'd hopes,
What lips, like thine, so sweetly join'd?
Where on the double rosebud droops
The fulness of the pensive mind;
Which all too dearly self-involved,
Yet sleeps a dreamless sleep to me;
A sleep by kisses undissolved,
That lets thee neither hear nor see:
But break it. In the name of wife,
And in the rights that name may give,
Are clasp'd the moral of thy life,
And that for which I care to live.

EPILOGUE.

So, Lady Flora, take my lay,
And, if you find a meaning there,
O whisper to your glass, and say,
‘What wonder, if he thinks me fair?’
What wonder I was all unwise,
To shape the song for your delight
Like long-tail’d birds of Paradise
That float thro’ Heaven, and cannot light?
Or old-world trains, upheld at court
By Cupid-boys of blooming hue—
But take it—earnest wed with sport,
And either sacred unto you.

MORTE D'ARTHUR.

So all day long the noise of battle roll'd
Among the mountains by the winter sea ;
Until King Arthur's table, man by man,
Had fallen in Lyonnesse about their Lord,
King Arthur : then, because his wound was deep,
The bold Sir Bedivere uplifted him,
Sir Bedivere, the last of all his knights,
And bore him to a chapel nigh the field,
A broken chancel with a broken cross,
That stood on a dark strait of barren land. /
On one side lay the Ocean, and on one
Lay a great water, and the moon was full.

Then spake King Arthur to Sir Bedivere :
'The sequel of to-day unsolders all
The goodliest fellowship of famous knights
Whereof this world holds record. Such a sleep
They sleep—the men I loved. I think that we
Shall never more, at any future time,

Delight our souls with talk of knightly deeds,
Walking about the gardens and the halls
Of Camelot, as in the days that were.
I perish by this people which I made,— |
Tho' Merlin sware that I should come again |
To rule once more—but let what will be, be,
I am so deeply smitten thro' the helm
That without help I cannot last till morn.
Thou therefore take my brand Excalibur, |
Which was my pride : for thou rememberest how
In those old days, one summer noon, an arm
Rose up from out the bosom of the lake,
Clothed in white samite, mystic, wonderful,
Holding the sword—and how I row'd across
And took it, and have worn it, like a king :
And, wheresoever I am sung or told
In aftertime, this also shall be known :
But now delay not : take Excalibur,
And fling him far into the middle mere :
Watch what thou seëst, and lightly bring me word.'

To him replied the bold Sir Bedivere :
'It is not meet, Sir King, to leave thee thus,
Aidless, alone, and smitten thro' the helm. A
A little thing may harm a wounded man.
Yet I thy hest will all perform at full, |
Watch what I see, and lightly bring thee word.'

So saying, from the ruin'd shrine he stept
And in the moon athwart the place of tombs,
Where lay the mighty bones of ancient men,
Old knights, and over them the sea-wind sang
Shrill, chill, with flakes of foam. He, stepping down
By zig-zag paths, and juts of pointed rock,
Came on the shining levels of the lake.

There drew he forth the brand Excalibur,
And o'er him, drawing it, the winter moon,
Brightening the skirts of a long cloud, ran forth
And sparkled keen with frost against the hilt :
For all the haft twinkled with diamond sparks,
Myriads of topaz-lights, and jacinth-work
Of subtlest jewellery. He gazed so long
That both his eyes were dazzled, as he stood,
This way and that dividing the swift mind,
In act to throw : but at the last it seem'd
Better to leave Excalibur conceal'd
There in the many-knotted waterflags, *1223*
That whistled stiff and dry about the marge.
So strode he back slow to the wounded King.

Then spake King Arthur to Sir Bedivere :
'Hast thou perform'd my mission which I gave?
What is it thou hast seen? or what hast heard?'

And answer made the bold Sir Bedivere :

\ 'I heard the ripple washing in the reeds,

And the wild water lapping on the crag.'

To whom replied King Arthur, faint and pale :

\ 'Thou hast betray'd thy nature and thy name.

Not rendering true answer, as besee'm'd

Thy fēalty, nor like a noble knight :

For surer sign had follow'd, either hand,

Or voice, or else a motion of the mere.

This is a shameful thing for men to lie.

Yet now, I charge thee, quickly go again

As thou art lief and dear, and do the thing

I bad thee, watch, and lightly bring me word.'

Then went Sir Bedivere the second time

Across the ridge, and paced beside the mere,

\ Counting the dewy pebbles, fix'd in thought ;

But when he saw the wonder of the hilt,

How curiously and strangely chased, he smote

His palms together, and he cried aloud,

\ 'And if indeed I cast the brand away,

Surely a precious thing, one worthy note,

Should thus be lost for ever from the earth,

Which might have pleased the eyes of many men.

What good should follow this, if this were done ?

What harm, undone ? deep harm to disobey,

- \ Seeing obedience is the bond of rule.
\\ Were it well to obey then, if a king demand
An act unprofitable, against himself?
The King is sick, and knows not what he does.
What record, or what relic of my lord
Should be to aftertime, but empty breath
And rumours of a doubt? but were this kept,
Stored in some treasure-house of mighty kings,
Some one might show it at a joust of arms,
\\ Saying, "King Arthur's sword, Excalibur,
Wrought by the lonely maiden of the Lake.
Nine years she wrought it, sitting in the deeps
Upon the hidden bases of the hills."
So might some old man speak in the aftertime
To all the people, winning reverence.
But now much honour and much fame were lost.'
- \ So spake he, clouded with his own conceit,
And hid Excalibur the second time,
And so strode back slow to the wounded King.

Then spoke King Arthur, breathing heavily :
'What is it thou hast seen? or what hast heard?'

And answer made the bold Sir Bedivere :
'I heard the water lapping on the crag,
And the long ripple washing in the reeds.'

To whom replied King Arthur, much in wrath :
‘ Ah, miserable and unkind, untrue,
Unknightly, traitor-hearted ! Woe is me !
Authority forgets a dying king,
Laid widow'd of the power in his eye
That bow'd the will. I see thee what thou art,
For thou, the latest-left of all my knights,
In whom should meet the offices of all,
Thou wouldst betray me for the precious hilt ;
Either from lust of gold, or like a girl
Valuing the giddy pleasure of the eyes.
Yet, for a man may fail in duty twice,
And the third time may prosper, get thee hence :
But, if thou spare to fling Excalibur,
I will arise and slay thee with my hands.’

Then quickly rose Sir Bedivere, and ran,
And, leaping down the ridges lightly, plunged
Among the bulrush-beds, and clutch'd the sword,
And strongly wheel'd and threw it. The great brand
Made lightnings in the splendour of the moon,
And flashing round and round, and whirl'd in an arch,
Shot like a streamer of the northern morn,
Seen where the moving isles of winter shock
By night, with noises of the northern sea.
So flash'd and fell the brand Excalibur :
But ere he dipt the surface, rose an arm

Clothed in white samite, mystic, wonderful,
And caught him by the hilt, and brandish'd him
Three times, and drew him under in the mere.
And lightly went the other to the King.

Then spoke King Arthur, drawing thicker breath :
'Now see I by thine eyes that this is done.
Speak out : what is it thou hast heard, or seen ?'

And answer made the bold Sir Bedivere :
'Sir King, I closed mine eyelids, lest the gems
Should blind my purpose, for I never saw,
Nor shall see, here or elsewhere, till I die,
Not tho' I live three lives of mortal men,
So great a miracle as yonder hilt.
Then with both hands I flung him, wheeling him ;
But when I look'd again, behold an arm,
Clothed in white samite, mystic, wonderful,
That caught him by the hilt, and brandish'd him
Three times, and drew him under in the mere.'

And answer made King Arthur, breathing hard :
'My end draws nigh ; 'tis time that I were gone.
Make broad thy shoulders to receive my weight,
And bear me to the margin ; yet I fear
My wound hath taken cold, and I shall die.'

So saying, from the pavement he half rose,
Slowly, with pain, reclining on his arm,
And looking wistfully with wide blue eyes
As in a picture. Him Sir Bedivere
Remorsefully regarded thro' his tears,
And would have spoken, but he found not words,
Then took with care, and kneeling on one knee,
O'er both his shoulders drew the languid hands,
And rising bore him thro' the place of tombs.

But, as he walk'd, King Arthur panted hard,
Like one that feels a nightmare on his bed
When all the house is mute. So sigh'd the King,
Muttering and murmuring at his ear, 'Quick, quick!
I fear it is too late, and I shall die.'

But the other swiftly strode from ridge to ridge,
Clothed with his breath, and looking, as he walk'd,
Larger than human on the frozen hills.

\ He heard the deep behind him, and a cry
Before. His own thought drove him, like a goad.

\ Dry clash'd his harness in the icy caves
And barren chasms, and all to left and right
The bare black cliff clang'd round him, as he based
His feet on juts of slippery crag that rang
Sharp-smitten with the dint of armed heels—
And on a sudden, lo! the level lake,
And the long glories of the winter moon.

Then saw they how there hove a dusky barge,
Dark as a funeral scarf from stem to stern,
Beneath them ; and descending they were ware
That all the decks were dense with stately forms
Black-stoled, black-hooded, like a dream—by these
Three Queens with crowns of gold—and from them rose
A cry that shiver'd to the tingling stars,
And, as it were one voice, an agony
Of lamentation, like a wind, that shrills
All night in a waste land, where no one comes,
Or hath come, since the making of the world.

Then murmur'd Arthur, ' Place me in the barge,'
And to the barge they came. There those three Queens
Put forth their hands, and took the King, and wept.
But she, that rose the tallest of them all
And fairest, laid his head upon her lap,
And loosed the shatter'd casque, and chafed his hands,
And call'd him by his name, complaining loud,
And dropping bitter tears against his brow
Striped with dark blood : for all his face was white
And colourless, and like the wither'd moon
Smote by the fresh beam of the springing east ;
And all his greaves and cuisses dash'd with drops
Of onset ; and the light and lustrous curls—
That made his forehead like a rising sun
High from the daïs-throne—were parch'd with dust ;

Or, clotted into points and hanging loose,
Mix'd with the knightly growth that fringed his lips.
So like a shatter'd column lay the King ;
Not like that Arthur who, with lance in rest,
From spur to plume a star of tournament,
Shot thro' the lists at Camelot, and charged
Before the eyes of ladies and of kings.

Then loudly cried the bold Sir Bedivere,
' Ah ! my Lord Arthur, whither shall I go ?
Where shall I hide my forehead and my eyes ?
For now I see the true old times are dead,
When every morning brought a noble chance,
And every chance brought out a noble knight.
Such times have been not since the light that led
The holy Elders with the gift of myrrh.
But now the whole ROUND TABLE is dissolved
Which was an image of the mighty world ;
And I, the last, go forth companionless,
And the days darken round me, and the years,
Among new men, strange faces, other minds.'

And slowly answered Arthur from the barge :
' The old order changeth, yielding place to new,
And God fulfils Himself in many ways,
Lest one good custom should corrupt the world.
Comfort thyself : what comfort is in me ?

I have lived my life, and that which I have done
May He within Himself make pure ! but thou,
If thou shouldst never see my face again,
Pray for my soul. More things are wrought by prayer
Than this world dreams of. Wherefore, let thy voice
Rise like a fountain for me night and day.
For what are men better than sheep or goats
That nourish a blind life within the brain,
If, knowing God, they lift not hands of prayer
Both for themselves and those who call them friend ?
For so the whole round earth is every way
Bound by gold chains about the feet of God.
But now farewell. I am going a long way
With these thou seest—if indeed I go—
(For all my mind is clouded with a doubt)
To the island-valley of Avilion ;
Where falls not hail, or rain, or any snow,
Nor ever wind blows loudly ; but it lies
Deep-meadow'd, happy, fair with orchard-lawns
And bowery hollows crown'd with summer sea,
Where I will heal me of my grievous wound.'

So said he, and the barge with oar and sail
Moved from the brink, like some full-breasted swan
That, fluting a wild carol ere her death,
Ruffles her pure cold plume, and takes the flood
With swarthy webs. Long stood Sir Bedivere

Revolving many memories, till the hull
Look'd one black dot against the verge of dawn,
And on the mere the wailing died away.

HERE ended Hall, and our last light, that long
Had wink'd and threaten'd darkness, flared and fell :
At which the Parson, sent to sleep with sound,
And waked with silence, grunted ' Good ! ' but we
Sat rapt : it was the tone with which he read—
Perhaps some modern touches here and there
Redeem'd it from the charge of nothingness—
Or else we loved the man, and prized his work ;
I know not : but we sitting, as I said,
The cock crew loud ; as at that time of year
The lusty bird takes every hour for dawn :
Then Francis, muttering, like a man ill-used,
' There now—that's nothing ! ' drew a little back,
And drove his heel into the smoulder'd log,
That sent a blast of sparkles up the flue :
And so to bed ; where yet in sleep I seem'd
To sail with Arthur under looming shores,
Point after point ; till on to dawn, when dreams
Begin to feel the truth and stir of day,
To me, methought, who waited with a crowd,
There came a bark that, blowing forward, bore
King Arthur, like a modern gentleman
Of stateliest port ; and all the people cried,

‘Arthur is come again : he cannot die.’
Then those that stood upon the hills behind
Repeated—‘Come again, and thrice as fair ;’
And, further inland, voices echo’d—‘Come
With all good things, and war shall be no more.’
At this a hundred bells began to peal,
That with the sound I woke, and heard indeed
The clear church-bells ring in the Christmas-morn.

THE BROOK.

HERE, by this brook, we parted ; I to the East
And he for Italy—too late—too late :
One whom the strong sons of the world despise ;
For lucky rhymes to him were scrip and share,
And mellow metres more than cent for cent ;
Nor could he understand how money breeds,
Thought it a dead thing ; yet himself could make
The thing that is not as the thing that is.
O had he lived ! In our schoolbooks we say,
Of those that held their heads above the crowd,
They flourish'd then or then ; but life in him
Could scarce be said to flourish, only touch'd
On such a time as goes before the leaf,
When all the wood stands in a mist of green,
And nothing perfect : yet the brook he loved,
For which, in branding summers of Bengal,
Or ev'n the sweet half-English Neilgherry air
I panted, seems, as I re-listen to it,
Prattling the primrose fancies of the boy,
To me that loved him ; for ' O brook,' he says,

‘O babbling brook,’ says Edmund in his rhyme,
‘Whence come you?’ and the brook, why not?
replies.

I come from haunts of coot and hern,
I make a sudden sally,
And sparkle out among the fern,
To bicker down a valley.

By thirty hills I hurry down,
Or slip between the ridges,
By twenty thorps, a little town,
And half a hundred bridges.

Till last by Philip’s farm I flow
To join the brimming river,
For men may come and men may go,
But I go on for ever.

‘Poor lad, he died at Florence, quite worn out,
Travelling to Naples. There is Darnley bridge,
It has more ivy ; there the river ; and there
Stands Philip’s farm where brook and river meet.

I chatter over stony ways,
In little sharps and trebles,
I bubble into eddyng bays,
I babble on the pebbles.

With many a curve my banks I fret
By many a field and fallow,
And many a fairy foreland set
With willow-weed and mallow.

I chatter, chatter, as I flow
To join the brimming river,
For men may come and men may go,
But I go on for ever.

‘But Philip chatter’d more than brook or bird ;
Old Philip ; all about the fields you caught
His weary daylong chirping, like the dry
High-elbow’d grigs that leap in summer grass.

I wind about, and in and out,
With here a blossom sailing,
And here and there a lusty trout,
And here and there a grayling,

And here and there a foamy flake
Upon me, as I travel
With many a silvery waterbreak
Above the golden gravel,

And draw them all along, and flow
To join the brimming river,
For men may come and men may go,
But I go on for ever.

‘O darling Katie Willows, his one child !
A maiden of our century, yet most meek ;
A daughter of our meadows, yet not coarse ;
Straight, but as lissome as a hazel wand ;
Her eyes a bashful azure, and her hair
In gloss and hue the chestnut, when the shell
Divides threefold to show the fruit within.

‘Sweet Katie, once I did her a good turn,
Her and her far-off cousin and betrothed,
James Willows, of one name and heart with her.
For here I came, twenty years back—the week
Before I parted with poor Edmund ; crost
By that old bridge which, half in ruins then,
Still makes a hoary eyebrow for the gleam
Beyond it, where the waters marry—crost,
Whistling a random bar of Bonny Doon,
And push’d at Philip’s garden-gate. The gate,
Half-parted from a weak and scolding hinge,
Stuck ; and he clamour’d from a casement, “Run”
To Katie somewhere in the walks below,
“Run, Katie !” Katie never ran : she moved
To meet me, winding under woodbine bowers,
A little flutter’d, with her eyelids down,
Fresh apple-blossom, blushing for a boon.

‘What was it ? less of sentiment than sense
Had Katie ; not illiterate ; nor of those
Who dabbling in the fount of fictive tears,
And nursed by mealy-mouth’d philanthropies,
Divorce the Feeling from her mate the Deed.

‘She told me. She and James had quarrell’d.
Why ?
What cause of quarrel ? None, she said, no cause ;

James had no cause : but when I prest the cause,
I learnt that James had flickering jealousies
Which anger'd her. Who anger'd James? I said.
But Katie snatch'd her eyes at once from mine,
And sketching with her slender pointed foot
Some figure like a wizard pentagram
On garden gravel, let my query pass
Unclaim'd, in flushing silence, till I ask'd
If James were coming. "Coming every day,"
She answer'd, "ever longing to explain,
But evermore her father came across
With some long-winded tale, and broke him short ;
And James departed vext with him and her."
How could I help her? "Would I—was it wrong?"
(Claspt hands and that petitionary grace
Of sweet seventeen subdued me ere she spoke)
"O would I take her father for one hour,
For one half-hour, and let him talk to me !"
And even while she spoke, I saw where James
Made toward us, like a wader in the surf,
Beyond the brook, waist-deep in meadow-sweet.

‘O Katie, what I suffer'd for your sake !
For in I went, and call'd old Philip out
To show the farm : full willingly he rose :
He led me thro' the short sweet-smelling lanes
Of his wheat-suburb, babbling as he went.

He praised his land, his horses, his machines ;
He praised his ploughs, his cows, his hogs, his dogs ;
He praised his hens, his geese, his guinea-hens ;
His pigeons, who in session on their roofs
Approved him, bowing at their own deserts :
Then from the plaintive mother's teat he took
Her blind and shuddering puppies, naming each,
And naming those, his friends, for whom they were :
Then crost the common into Darnley chase
To show Sir Arthur's deer. In copse and fern
Twinkled the innumerable ear and tail.
Then, seated on a serpent-rooted beech,
He pointed out a pasturing colt, and said :
"That was the four-year-old I sold the Squire."
And there he told a long long-winded tale
Of how the Squire had seen the colt at grass,
And how it was the thing his daughter wish'd,
And how he sent the bailiff to the farm
To learn the price, and what the price he ask'd,
And how the bailiff swore that he was mad,
But he stood firm ; and so the matter hung ;
He gave them line : and five days after that
He met the bailiff at the Golden Fleece,
Who then and there had offer'd something more,
But he stood firm ; and so the matter hung ;
He knew the man ; the colt would fetch its price ;
He gave them line : and how by chance at last

(It might be May or April, he forgot,
The last of April or the first of May)
He found the bailiff riding by the farm,
And, talking from the point, he drew him in,
And there he mellow'd all his heart with ale,
Until they closed a bargain, hand in hand.

‘Then, while I breathed in sight of haven, he,
Poor fellow, could he help it? recommenced,
And ran thro’ all the coltish chronicle,
Wild Will, Black Bess, Tantivy, Tallyho,
Reform, White Rose, Bellerophon, the Jilt,
Arbaces, and Phenomenon, and the rest,
Till, not to die a listener, I arose,
And with me Philip, talking still; and so
We turn’d our foreheads from the falling sun,
And following our own shadows thrice as long
As when they follow’d us from Philip’s door,
Arrived, and found the sun of sweet content
Re-risen in Katie’s eyes, and all things well.

I steal by lawns and grassy plots,
I slide by hazel covers;
I move the sweet forget-me-nots
That grow for happy lovers.

I slip, I slide, I gloom, I glance,
Among my skimming swallows;
I make the netted sunbeam dance
Against my sandy shallows.

I murmur under moon and stars
In brambly wildernesses ;
I linger by my shingly bars ;
I loiter round my cresses ;

And out again I curve and flow
To join the brimming river,
For men may come and men may go,
But I go on for ever.

Yes, men may come and go ; and these are gone,
All gone. My dearest brother, Edmund, sleeps,
Not by the well-known stream and rustic spire,
But unfamiliar Arno, and the dome
Of Brunelleschi ; sleeps in peace : and he,
Poor Philip, of all his lavish waste of words
Remains the lean P. W. on his tomb :
I scraped the lichen from it : Katie walks
By the long wash of Australasian seas
Far off, and holds her head to other stars,
And breathes in April-autumns. All are gone.'

So Lawrence Aylmer, seated on a stile
In the long hedge, and rolling in his mind
Old waifs of rhyme, and bowing o'er the brook
A tonsured head in middle age forlorn,
Mused, and was mute. On a sudden a low breath
Of tender air made tremble in the hedge
The fragile bindweed-bells and briony rings ;
And he look'd up. There stood a maiden near,

Waiting to pass. In much amaze he stared
On eyes a bashful azure, and on hair
In gloss and hue the chestnut, when the shell
Divides threefold to show the fruit within :
Then, wondering, ask'd her 'Are you from the farm?'
'Yes' answer'd she. 'Pray stay a little : pardon me ;
What do they call you?' 'Katie.' 'That were
strange.
What surname?' 'Willows.' 'No!' 'That is
my name.'
'Indeed!' and here he look'd so self-perplext,
That Katie laugh'd, and laughing blush'd, till he
Laugh'd also, but as one before he wakes,
Who feels a glimmering strangeness in his dream.
Then looking at her ; 'Too happy, fresh and fair,
Too fresh and fair in our sad world's best bloom,
To be the ghost of one who bore your name
About these meadows, twenty years ago.'

'Have you not heard?' said Katie, 'we came back.
We bought the farm we tenanted before.
Am I so like her? so they said on board.
Sir, if you knew her in her English days,
My mother, as it seems you did, the days
That most she loves to talk of, come with me.
My brother James is in the harvest-field :
But she—you will be welcome—O, come in !'

THE VOYAGE.

I.

WE left behind the painted buoy
That tosses at the harbour-mouth ;
And madly danced our hearts with joy,
As fast we fled to the South :
How fresh was every sight and sound
On open main or winding shore !
We knew the merry world was round,
And we might sail for evermore.

II.

Warm broke the breeze against the brow,
Dry sang the tackle, sang the sail :
The Lady's-head upon the prow
Caught the shrill salt, and sheer'd the gale.
The broad seas swell'd to meet the keel,
And swept behind ; so quick the run,
We felt the good ship shake and reel,
We seem'd to sail into the Sun !

III.

How oft we saw the Sun retire,
And burn the threshold of the night,
Fall from his Ocean-lane of fire,
And sleep beneath his pillar'd light !
How oft the purple-skirted robe
Of twilight slowly downward drawn,
As thro' the slumber of the globe
Again we dash'd into the dawn !

IV.

New stars all night above the brim
Of waters lighten'd into view ;
They climb'd as quickly, for the rim
Changed every moment as we flew.
Far ran the naked moon across
The houseless ocean's heaving field,
Or flying shone, the silver boss
Of her own halo's dusky shield ;

V.

The peaky islet shifted shapes,
High towns on hills were dimly seen,
We past long lines of Northern capes
And dewy Northern meadows green.

We came to warmer waves, and deep
Across the boundless east we drove,
Where those long swells of breaker sweep
The nutmeg rocks and isles of clove.

VI.

By peaks that flamed, or, all in shade,
Gloom'd the low coast and quivering
brine
With ashy rains, that spreading made
Fantastic plume or sable pine ;
By sands and steaming flats, and floods
Of mighty mouth, we scudded fast,
And hills and scarlet-mingled woods
Glow'd for a moment as we past.

VII.

O hundred shores of happy climes,
How swiftly stream'd ye by the bark !
At times the whole sea burn'd, at times
With wakes of fire we tore the dark ;
At times a carven craft would shoot
From havens hid in fairy bowers,
With naked limbs and flowers and fruit, .
But we nor paused for fruit nor flowers.

VIII.

For one fair Vision ever fled
Down the waste waters day and night,
And still we follow'd where she led,
In hope to gain upon her flight.
Her face was evermore unseen,
And fixt upon the far sea-line ;
But each man murmur'd, 'O my Queen,
I follow till I make thee mine.'

IX.

And now we lost her, now she gleam'd
Like Fancy made of golden air,
Now nearer to the prow she seem'd
Like Virtue firm, like Knowledge fair,
Now high on waves that idly burst
Like Heavenly Hope she crown'd the sea,
And now, the bloodless point reversed,
She bore the blade of Liberty.

X.

And only one among us—him
We pleased not—he was seldom pleased :
He saw not far : his eyes were dim :
But ours he swore were all diseased.

‘A ship of fools,’ he shriek’d in spite,
 ‘A ship of fools,’ he sneer’d and wept.
And overboard one stormy night
 He cast his body, and on we swept.

XI.

And never sail of ours was furl’d,
 Nor anchor dropt at eve or morn ;
We lov’d the glories of the world,
 But laws of nature were our scorn.
For blasts would rise and rave and cease,
 But whence were those that drove the sail
Across the whirlwind’s heart of peace,
 And to and thro’ the counter gale ?

XII.

Again to colder climes we came,
 For still we follow’d where she led :
Now mate is blind and captain lame,
 And half the crew are sick or dead,
But, blind or lame or sick or sound,
 We follow that which flies before :
We know the merry world is round,
 And we may sail for evermore.

NOTES

TO

SELECT POEMS OF TENNYSON.





NOTES.

THE HOLY GRAIL.

[**Chief Authorities:**—G. Paris, *Littérature française au moyen-âge*, 2nd ed., 1890; John Rhys, *Studies in the Arthurian Legend*, 1891; C. F. Keary, in the *Dictionary of National Biography*, art. "Arthur"; Birch-Hirschfeld, *Die Sage vom Gral*; G. M. Harper, *The Legend of the Holy Grail*, in Pub. of the Mod. Language Assoc. of America, N.S.I., 1893; H. Littlehale, *Essays on Lord Tennyson's Idylls of the King*, 1893; M. W. Maccallum, *Tennyson's Idylls of the King and Arthurian Story from the XVIth Century*, 1894.]

THE ARTHURIAN LEGEND.

The mythological Arthur and the historical Arthur.—It has become certain, thanks chiefly to the researches of Professor Rhys, that behind the Arthurian story, in which there still linger undeniable evidences, can be traced the outlines of a very considerable Celtic heathen mythology. Vaguely, it is true, but still visible in this heathen mythology appear the chief persons of the Arthurian legend: Arthur (*Arator*), god of ploughing; his wife Gwenhwyvar, goddess of the twilight; Medrawd, god of the shades, who carries off Gwenhwyvar and is warred on by Arthur. With Arthur was associated a younger sun-god, Gawain, whose strength was thrice increased at noon (Malory, *Morte Darthur*, iv. 18) while Merlin, Myrd-

din, Mordunjos, 'of the sea-fort,' perhaps points to an older divinity of light who disappears in the western waves. One of Arthur's exploits is bringing off the cauldron of Hades, which according to Celtic legend had wonderful properties of feeding any company however large, though it would not cook for a coward, and of restoring to life dead bodies thrown into it. Similarly Brân's head and the poisoned spear that killed him had magical properties, the former giving food to all who wished to partake. The obscurity and confusion into which this ancient mythology fell are due to two causes,—the advent of Christianity and the triumphant invasion of the English. The one deposed the old divinities, degrading them to the rank of something less than divine, yet more than human; the other set the Welsh poets aglow in patriotic praise of their war-leaders. One of these war-leaders in the years of struggle against the English invaders (450-510) was called Arthur. Fiction has so completely taken possession of the figure of Arthur that it is almost impossible to discern what historic truth still exists in the mass of fabulous details that have clustered around the British king. Either in South Britain or in North Britain or as *Comes Britannice*, holding "a roving commission to defend the province wherever his presence might be called for,"—for scholars are not agreed as to the scene of his exploits—Arthur, born towards the end of the fifth century, seems to have been for years a great military leader, opposing the heathen invaders, defeating them in twelve successive battles, and falling himself at Camlan in Cornwall, in battle against his rebellious kinsman Modred. Even in these details we seem to see traces of the mythological Arthur with whom the war-leader was soon confounded. And only by the supposition of this association of the exploits of the old Celtic god and the new Celtic hero can we explain the exceeding fame and renown of the later Arthur.

The legendary Arthur.—Leaving out Welsh sources, there is no written record of Arthur till several centuries after his death. When his name for the first time occurs, he appears,

as we said above, only as the successful leader of his nation in twelve great battles. This is in the *Historia Britonum* ascribed to Nennius, who lived in the last years of the eighth century. Meanwhile, however, Celtic Britain had seized on his figure as the subject of song and story, and found in magnifying his great deeds of yore a compensation for the ignominy of their position before the English conquerors. No sooner had the Normans conquered England than they found a source of deep interest in the number and excellence of the British bards and in the fascinating novelty of their abundant native traditions. What was needed in order that these legends and traditions might become available for the cultivated world was their expression in a language more generally known than Welsh. The undying honour of giving such expression belongs to Geoffrey, a monk of Monmouth (near Gloucester), who died, bishop of St. Asaph, in 1154.

Arthur in literature.—In three Latin works, especially in the *Historia Regum Britanniae*, Geoffrey incorporated the legends and traditions he found at hand, and, though professing to make a translation of an old Gallic book, drew from his own imagination a systematic and detailed account of pretended kings of the Britons. Reaching the period of the struggles that followed the landing of the English, Geoffrey gave the reins to his fancy, wove about the meagre mention of Nennius's war-leader Arthur, a tale of a most marvellous and fascinating kind. Arthur, son of Uther Pendragon, becomes through his great military powers a world-king. Driving out the English from Britain, he conquers Scotland, Ireland, Norway, France, establishes a court that is the centre of chivalry, and is on the way to the capture of Rome when his nephew Modred, left as regent of England, rebels, seizes and marries Guanhumara (Guinevere), Arthur's wife. Arthur returning defeats and slays Modred, is himself mortally wounded, and is transported to the paradise of the heroic dead, Avalon, there to await the time of his triumphant return to this world.

Geoffrey's book is an epoch-making work. Seized upon by

the Anglo-Normans it was made the basis of numerous works in prose and verse of which those by Geoffrey Gaimar (1145) and the Guernseyman Wace (1155), who first mentions the *Table Ronde*, are the most important.

The work of Wace, which was a *Brut*, or history of the British kings as descended from Brutus of Troy, calls for especial note. For writing in French, at a time when French literature and civilization were beginning to dominate western Europe, Wace gave universal currency to the story of Geoffrey and a poetical form—the four-stress couplet—that served as a model to almost all the romances derived from it. It is from Wace that our own Layamon writes his *Brut*, the first Arthurian poem in the English language (1205, 1275).

Meanwhile the native songs of the Welsh bards were likewise passing into French, either directly or through English versions. Marie de France, who lived at the court of Henry II. of England, is the author of some fifteen of the most charming poems of old French literature, all based on Celtic lays. **Trist(r)an(m)**, the prince of war, hunting, and song, emerges from the bardic sources as early as 1150–1170 as the hero of exploits as fascinating as Arthur's, which were related in Anglo-French by Béroul and Thomas. Even in the earliest French account *Tristan*, who had originally nothing to do with Arthur, is joined to the number of 'Arthur's knights. This happens likewise with **Gawain**, who, originally the hero of independent exploits, is brought by the poets, swayed by the magic of Arthur's name, into the circle of the Round Table. Similarly **Percivale** (also in Welsh, *Peredur*), the hero of the Grail legend, seeks knighthood at the hands of Arthur and makes the king's court the starting point of his adventures. This accretion of originally independent stories around a common centre is, while not new in literature, one of the most interesting features of the Arthurian cycle.

The Graal Legend.—As we are specially concerned with the legend of the Grail, it is necessary for us to pause for a moment to consider the earlier versions of the story. We have

already seen that in Welsh mythology mention is made of certain objects with talismanic properties—a magic cauldron, Brân's head and lance, etc. It would appear that in one early poem we can distinguish, however disguised and dimly apprehended, the original Celtic basis. The French version of Chrétien de Troies (1190) relates how Percivale, brought up in ignorance of chivalry, wins from his unwilling mother permission to go to Arthur's court. In a castle of the Rich Fisher, where his adventures lead him, attendants bring before him a marvellous bleeding lance and a shining "*graal*." When he tells of these marvels in Arthur's court, he is reproached for not asking their meaning. Gawain goes forth to seek the bleeding lance and to learn its meaning. Percivale for five years does knightly service, but one Good Friday he is convicted of forgetfulness of God in riding armed on that holy day. He hastens to a hermit who shrives him from this sin, and discovers to him that another sin, that of leaving his mother to die alone, prevented him from learning the meaning of the talismanic lance and *graal*. Percivale, now, once more rides forth on the quest. This story of Chrétien is unfinished and is remarkably like the Welsh story in the Mabinogi of *Peredur ab Eivrawc*, found in the Red Book of Hergest, a MS. of the latter part of the fourteenth century, published and translated by Lady Charlotte Guest in 1838. About the time of Chrétien's poem, there appear the first accounts of A NEW LEGEND at once to be incorporated with the (apparently) Welsh tale of Chrétien and the Mabinogion. One of these accounts, found between the work of the French poet and one of his continuators is as follows:—Joseph of Arimathæa, a friend of Pilate, had caught in a vessel the blood of Christ when His side was pierced on the cross, and had given burial to Christ's body. He revered the vessel (grail) so much that the Jews threw him into prison, from which he was delivered by the Lord. Coming to England with the Grail, he was miraculously supplied with food by the holy vessel. On his death he begged that the Grail might ever remain with his

descendants, of whom were the Rich Fisher and Percivale. In the work of another French poet, Robert of Boron, towards the end of the twelfth century, we have the full flow of the legend of the Grail merged inseparably with the story of Percivale, the whole pervaded with a distinctively mystic and Christian tone. This association of the Grail legend with the most sacred Christian mysteries naturally affected the hero of the story. It was felt that only a chaste and stainless knight should achieve the grail, so that in the *Queste du saint graal* the saintly Galahad displaces the knightly Percivale. Meanwhile, too, the Arthurian court was fully established, and into the quest were drawn the chief Arthurian heroes, whose achievement of the grail was made dependent upon their purity and spiritual strength. These changes—Galahad as hero, the various Arthurian knights taking part in the quest, the grail as the test of purity—complete the mediæval development of the legend. From this time on the story of the Grail is virtually as we all know it to-day.

It is impossible to mention here the many French versions that more or less closely followed Boron's. It is likewise impossible to enumerate the host of Arthurian romances that, growing from a French centre, filled the literature of Europe from Italy to Iceland. Nor has there been any sign of death and decay in the personages of the poetical Arthurian world. Keeping only to English literature, we have the figure of Arthur a favorite popular theme of our old ballad literature. The *Misfortunes of Arthur* is one of the earliest of Elizabethan dramas. Spenser drew his inspiration and the material of his *Faerie Queen* from the Arthurian poems. Milton in his earlier days planned an epic poem to embrace

"What resounds
In fable and romance of Uther's son,
Begirt with British and Armoric knights."

When the Romantic Revival of the closing years of the eighteenth century arose, the interest in mediæval literature and life which accompanied it and in part caused it, could not pos-

sibly pass Arthur by. Scott not only edited *Sir Tristrem* but wrote in his *Bridal of Triermain* a genuine Arthurian poem; Reginald Heber devoted himself to a *Morte Arthur* and a *Masque of Guendolen*; Peacock in his *Maid Marian* and *Misfortunes of Elphin* led the way to the modern treatment, the modern spiritualization of the ancient stories. Wordsworth was keenly sensitive to the charm of the old romantic poetry and wins from old tradition the story of *Artegall and Elidure*. This was in 1815. In 1832 Alfred Tennyson published *The Lady of Shalott*, and, still continuing and developing the subtle working over of the old poetic material into the new poetical spirit of his age, which is characteristic in Wordsworth, began a devotion to Arthurian literature that spans the whole great stretch of his poetical activity. The theme was in the air, everyone breathed its influence no doubt, but still to Tennyson was chiefly owing the inspiration of the many contemporary poems on this theme:—Lytton's *King Arthur*, Matthew Arnold's *Tristram and Iseult*, William Morris's *Defence of Guenevere*, Lowell's *Sir Launfal*, Hawker's *Quest of the Sangraal*, Millard's *Tristram and Iseult*, Simcox's *Farewell of Ganore*, Swinburne's *Tristram of Lyonesse*, etc.

A tremendous and marvellous body of literature, the solace of centuries of human life, all growing, virtually, out of the work of an old monk who eight centuries ago in the quiet of a poor border monastery of west England imagined the glories of Arthur and his court!

THE SOURCES OF "THE IDYLLS OF THE KING":

TENNYSON'S USE OF HIS MATERIAL.

General Sources.—Of the vast body of Arthurian poetry, Tennyson used in the main two works, the *Mabinogion* (see p. 115) for the idylls of Geraint and for the remaining idylls

Morte Darthur of Sir Thomas Malory.* This later work, completed in 1470. was drawn from many French sources, some of which are long lost, and is of the very greatest importance in English literature. For it is not only a mine of Arthurian story to which our poets have always had recourse, but also a work of very great genius, exhibiting everywhere a plastic power that moulded the varying and various accounts into a consistent whole, and a feeling for style that has infused the prose narrative with animation, grace, poetry, and at times with a simple and tragic feeling, so that it has become "a possession for all time."

Tennyson used the greatest freedom in treating his material. While in the main we must recognize the essential traits of Arthurian character and story, we must see as well that the poet infused the whole with nineteenth-century thought and feeling, created new characters or deepened the shades on old, cut away or developed or invented details and episodes, and, greatest change of all, has, especially in the later idylls, given to the old story the connotation of a symbolic image of the life of the Soul. In short, the Idylls must stand as original poems, not as transcriptions or rehandlings. This is especially true of the *Holy Grail*.

Source of the "Holy Grail."—Tennyson takes the theme from Malory, who writes from one of the rehandlings of the *Queste* mentioned above (p. 116). While Tennyson gets many of his incidents and much of his description from Malory, "nowhere else in the Idylls has he departed so widely from his model. Much of the incident is due to him, and replaces with advantage the nauseous disquisitions upon chastity which occupy so large a space in the *Queste*. The artist's instinct

*The best cheap edition published is edited by Sir Edward Strachey in the Globe edition, Macmillan & Co., and should be read with the Idylls. Extracts, sufficient for comparative study of these Selections, are contained in "Malory's History of King Arthur and the Quest of the Holy Grail," edited in the Camelot Series by Ernest Rhys. The W. J. Gage Co., Toronto.

rather than the scholar's respect for the oldest form of story, led him to practically restore Perceval to his rightful place as hero of the quest. His fortunes we can follow with an interest that passing shadow, Galahad, wholly fails to evoke. Nor, as may easily be seen, is the fundamental conception of the twelfth century romance (*i.e.*, the virtue of renouncing the world in favor of spiritual ecstacy) to the Laureate's taste. Arthur is his ideal of manhood, and Arthur's energies are practical and human in aim and execution. What the "blameless King" speaks when he first learns of the quest represents, we may guess, the author's real attitude towards the whole fantastic business."—Alfred Nutt, *Legend of the Holy Grail*, p. 244, n.

"THE IDYLLS" AS A SERIES.

Tennyson's interest in the Arthurian story covers almost the whole period of his literary life. *The Lady of Shalott* was published as early as 1832, *The Epic (Morte d'Arthur)* in 1842, while the latest idyll, *Balin and Balan*, dates in 1886 and the lyric, *Mertin and the Gleam*, 1889. There is no doubt the poet early conceived the plan of writing an epical series on the subject of Arthur. When in 1869 the chief idylls were published, the poet referring to the *Passing of Arthur* remarks: "This last, the earliest written of the poems, is here connected with the rest in accordance with an early project of the author's." To the completion of this early project the poet, throughout his life, devoted himself assiduously, and was able before his death to view the whole fabric of the idylls as a well-rounded achievement. To appreciate the part taken by individual poems, it is necessary that we should see the scope of the design in general and in detail.

General Design.—In brief, the general design is to depict Arthur enforcing his sovereignty over a lawless country and, by the founding of his Round Table, over a turbulent knight-hood; to narrate separate episodes in the lives of his knights,

of his counsellor, Merlin, and of his queen, Guinevere; to tell the progress of the forces of evil set working by the guilty love of Lancelot for the queen, which, little by little gaining strength, at last bring about the dismemberment of the court, the rebellion of Modred, and the death of Arthur.

The Idylls in Detail.—The idylls in detail are as follows. The date affixed shows the time at which the poet filled in each part of the design.

The Coming of Arthur (1869). The events in the coronation of Arthur are described; how he delivered King Leodogran from the heathen and wedded his lovely daughter Guinevere; and how he established his realm against the assaults of Rome and the heathen.

Gareth and Lynette (1872). Some years had passed when Gareth, son of Lot of Orkney, tiring of home, came to Arthur's court to serve a year at his mother's command in the king's kitchen. When knights are being despatched to redress wrongs throughout the kingdom, Gareth demands a quest, that of answering the entreaty of the Lady Lyonors, grievously beset in her castle. He obtains the boon, and following Lynette, who had brought her sister's entreaty to the king, successively overcomes the three knights who hold Lyonors in restraint. With each victory the smell of kitchen-vassalage, which has clung about Gareth, grows less and less apparent to the high-spirited Lynette, so that

‘He that told the tale in olden times
Says that Sir Gareth wedded Lyonors,
But he, that told it later, says Lynette.’

Enid (1859), divided after the first edition into the *Marriage of Geraint* and *Geraint and Enid*. In the former the prince of Devon, Geraint, had wandered abroad with Guinevere. A stranger knight passed them and because of an insult done the queen by the knight's follower, a dwarf, Geraint set off in swift pursuit to avenge her. The knight goes to his fortress, but Geraint passes into a ruined castle near by, where dwells old Yniol, dispossessed of his lands by his nephew of the

fortress, Edyrn. There he obtains arms, there he sees and loves the beautiful Enid. On her behalf, as well as to avenge Guinevere, he conquers Edyrn in the tourney for the sparrowhawk, the prize of beauty, sending him to the queen to expiate the insult previously done her. In great splendor Geraint and Enid are wedded. They had lived in the court but a year or two, when rumors of the guilty love of Lancelot and the queen began to fill men's ears. Geraint, fearing for his wife's purity, departed with her to Devon, where he lived a gay but slothful life. The noble Enid lamenting his inaction awakens in her husband's mind suspicions of her fidelity. He determines to put her to the most extreme tests.

Geraint and Enid. He clothes her in the meanest dress, lays on her heavy commands, exposes her to the dissolute advances of an old suitor, Limours, and to the violence of Earl Doorm. Her sweet faithfulness through all these tests wins again Geraint's trust; they return to court, and then again to Devon, where after years Geraint

'Crown'd

A happy life with a fair death, and fell
Against the heathen of the Northern Sea
In battle, fighting for the blameless king.'

Balin and Balan (1886). The brothers Balin and Balan held a fountain challenging all, till overcome by Arthur. When Pellam neglected to send tribute, Balan was sent to quell Pellam's demon-son, Garlon. Balin remaining at court was the unhappy witness of the love of Lancelot and the queen, both of whom he had utterly revered, and dashed away furiously on wild adventure. Coming to Pellam's castle, he slew Garlon and escaped to the forest. There he was found by Vivien whose serpent-like hints rouse him to madness at the thought of Lancelot and the queen. He defaces his shield, shrieking with passion. At the cry Balan appears, thinking he was the demon-like Garlon; the two fail to recognize each other, fight, and are both mortally wounded.

Merlin and Vivien (as *Vivien*, 1869). The woman of the harlot mind, Vivien, after spreading corruption in Arthur's

court and tempting even the King, spent her art on Merlin, with whom she fled to the Breton forest of Broceliande. There with the subtle beauty of her person and the venom of her tongue, that 'left not even Lancelot brave, nor Galahad clean,' she brought the sage magician under her charm, till

'In the hollow oak he lay as dead,
And lost to life and use and name and fame.'

Lancelot and Elaine (as *Elaine*, 1859).—Eight years had Lancelot won the diamond prize of the tournament. The ninth year, fancying the queen wishes him to stay with her, he makes excuse to Arthur for not jousting. But she bids him go as one unknown, and leaving his own shield with the lord of Astolat, in the care of his daughter Elaine, he with a blank shield departs to the tournament. He wins the prize of the lists, but is desperately wounded, and hastens away without the prize. Gawain, sent by Arthur with the prize to seek out the unknown knight, leaves the diamond with Elaine, whose favour Lancelot had borne in the lists. She finds the wounded knight, nurses him to life. But that

'The shackles of an old love straiten'd him,
His honour rooted in dishonour stood,'

he might have loved her, but now he could not. Elaine dies of her unrequited love. Her body, placed in a barge, floats into Camelot. She was buried like a queen, mourned by all, but most by Lancelot.

The Holy Grail (1869).—Here we find the crisis in Arthur's fortunes, for dissolution is inevitable, when the knights disperse on objects not the king's. Into the cell of the holy maid, sister of the knight Percivale, came the scandal of the court, and she by prayer and fasting besought Christ for a sight of the Holy Grail and for a sinless world. Then indeed she saw the grail, and Percivale learning of this prayed and fasted, and with him many others. It was a year of miracle. Once in the banquet-hall Galahad sat in Merlin's magic chair, and the Grail appeared, and Arthur being away, all swore, none having seen it but Galahad, to seek the Grail.

And Arthur returning saw in these vows and in that vision a sign to main his order, yet bade them go, their vows being sacred. As, indeed, it proved. Scarce a tithe of the knights returned from the wonderful quest : Galahad was lost to earth ; Percivale left the sword for the cowl ; only the king saw his clear duty to guard what he ruled, working out his immediate duties despite all visions.

Pelleas and Ettare (1869).—One of Arthur's new knights, Pelleas, came by chance upon the princess Ettare and her companions journeying to the "Tournament of Youth" at Caerleon. He loves her, wins for her the prize of the tournament, serves her faithfully ; but for his love and service he receives only the scorn and contempt of the haughty princess. Pelleas allows Gawain to mediate between them, but learns that Gawain has betrayed him for his own pleasure, and that Ettare is impure. The treachery of the knight, the impurity of Ettare, drive Pelleas to frenzy. He gallops wildly to Percivale in his monastery, only to hear the rumors of the guilt of Lancelot and Guinevere ; then to Camelot, to dash against Lancelot, crying "I pass to blast and blaze the crime of Lancelot and the queen." Lancelot overthrows and pardons him, but knows that for himself and the queen the evil day is at hand.

The Last Tournament (1871). In the North, rebellion was defying the king, when the last tournament was held at Camelot. It was called the "Tournament of Dead Innocence," and seemed a mockery now of Arthur's court, where half-obedience and 'manners somewhat fallen from reverence' meet the king. Tristram won the tourney prize, the same Tristram of Lyonesse, who loved Isolt, queen to Mark of Cornwall. Now he brings her the prize of jewels, and the two talk, sing, love, and are happy, till a shadow rises behind them and Mark cleaves Tristram through the brain. The northern rebellion, meanwhile had fallen before the king, but Arthur returning home, found the queen's bower dark and empty, and only Dagonet, the fool, whimpering, "I shall never make thee smile again."

Guinevere (1859).—For Guinevere had fled the court. Modred, the traitor, long had spied upon her. Once Lancelot had surprised him watching, and cast him down like a worm. Fear and remorse had begun to torment the queen, and she bade Lancelot fly the court. But ever he delayed, till at last, at their final meeting. Modred came upon them with his creatures, and the worst was known. Guinevere fled to sanctuary among the nuns of Almesbury; Lancelot to his castle, to be vainly besieged by the king; Modred, leagued with the English invaders usurped the realm of Arthur. At Almesbury Guinevere and Arthur meet, where too late the queen feels the greatness of the king, and where he in his nobleness of heart forgives her; where, too, after years of good deeds and pure life she dies Abbess of the convent.

The Passing of Arthur, first written as the *Morte d'Arthur*, enclosed in the poem entitled *The Epic* (1842). Casting away the setting, the poet gave considerable expansions to the *Morte d'Arthur*, and published it as the *Passing of Arthur* (1869).—Arthur pursued Modred to the utmost bounds of Lyonesse, and there gave him battle. The fight was long and bitter. Man by man Arthur's Table fell about their lord, and of the rebel army only Modred remained. Modred the King slew, but was himself mortally wounded. He bade his knight, Sir Bedivere, cast Excalibur into the neighbouring lake. The sword was caught and drawn down by a mystic arm in the mere, and the king knew his work was done. He was borne to the lake, where a dusky barge and three queens received him. And Bedivere, climbing the highest crag saw the black hull grow less and less, and vanish into light.

The *Idylls* have a Dedication to the Prince Consort (1862) and an Envoy to the Queen (1872).

THE MEANING OF THE TERM "IDYLL" AS APPLIED TO "THE IDYLLS OF THE KING."*

It is obvious from the preceding account of "The Idylls" that we have to do with a series of poems in which the form, breadth and fulness of treatment, and the attitude of the personages show all the characteristics of epic poetry. Why then are they called "Idylls"? The Greek word *eidullion* (Lat. *idyllium*, Eng. *idyll* (*i'dil*)) properly means "a little picture." Greek idyllic poetry, as in Theocritus, was not merely pastoral poetry, as the words to-day suggest. Mythology, life on the shady hillside, in the streets under the sun or moon, a contest of wit, a lament of passion, such were the themes of the idyllic poet. They were presented preferably in dialogue, though at times the idyll was simply a short narrative poem, or a lyric, or a dramatic monologue. The subjects were various, the mode of presentation varied. What characterized the idylls was their style: they were "little pictures" of human life, presenting one simple theme in a brief and highly-wrought form by the aid of the most delicate and graceful touches. The Greeks, especially of Alexandria, had grown tired of long epics; if the subject had to be heroic let us have, they said, no *Iliad*, but an interesting episode with vivid picturesque touches, and not long, for 'a big book is a big nuisance.' So arose the "epic idyll."

So, too, among English readers of this century, long epics like the *Fairie Queen* or *Paradise Lost* were out of fashion. To write an epic poem that would be read, one had to break up the old epic moulds, and invent or adopt a new fashion. Tennyson was early a disciple of Theocritus, and the influence of the Greek can be traced throughout all his idyllic poetry. *Godiva* takes its form from *Hylas*, *Ænone* derives its elegiac refrain from the *Song of Daphnis*, *The Lotos-Eaters* is charged

*Symonds, *The Greek Poets*. ii. 24 f.; Mahaffy, *Greek Life and Thought*, p. 266; Stedman, *Victorian Poets*, p. 201 ff.

with landscape effects from the *Hylas* already mentioned. Equally characteristic is his indebtedness in pastoral idylls like *The Gardener's Daughter*, *Edwin Morris*, *The Brook*, *The Miller's Daughter*, though here the poet is representing, not antique life, but the life of to-day. In poems such as these "Tennyson revived the true idyllic purpose, adopting the form mainly as a structure in which to exhibit, with equal naturalness and beauty, the scenery, thought, manners, of his own country and time."

Tennyson's first effort in Arthurian poetry was not conceived as idyllic. *The Morte d'Arthur* was published under the title *The Epic*; it alone was saved among other books that were consigned to the flames, being but 'faint Homeric echoes, nothing worth'; its style is epic in character, though, as has been noticed, the speech of the departing Arthur is semi-idyllic. For all that "The Idylls" were not executed as an epic poem. The fancy of the poet was drawn from time to time to the most fascinating parts of the Arthurian story, and these different episodes were wrought into highly-finished pictures, without reference at first to any unity of aim. But these pictures insensibly grew till at last they presented the full epic theme of Arthur, yet still not in an epic form. For *The Idylls* remain a series of highly-wrought pictures—the action of one incident does not, as in the true epic, merge into the action of another, nor can we trace in consistent development throughout the various poems the fortunes of the chief personages of the action. Implicit in the stories is the Epic of Arthur, but the execution gives us "The Idylls of the King."

Are they true idylls in a Theocritean sense? "We have," says Mahaffy, "among the idylls of Theocritus epic poems, both in subject and style, such as the meeting of Pollux and Amycus in combat, which are as like in character to Lord Tennyson's idylls as possible for poems of twenty centuries apart."

THE "IDYLLS" AS AN ALLEGORY.

It must be firmly held that any attempt to give a close allegorical interpretation to the *Idylls* must be unsuccessful. What we have in the main is a series of noble poems, in which we see diverse types of men and women, governed by the good and bad impulses of their natures, acting their parts in the drama of old-time chivalric life, and for which old-time romances furnished the story and essential details. We can see in this no preconceived doctrine worked out in elaborate symbolism to justify us in regarding the *Idylls* as an allegory pure and simple. No one reading the earlier idylls, the *Morted' Arthur*, *Enid*, *Vivien*, *Elaine*, and *Guinevere*, can fairly find any sure traces of allegory in those pictures of human life. They stand on the letter of the text, and their moral import grows, as in the highest art it must grow, out of our sympathy with what is lovely in human nature and human action. But it was evident in the idylls from *The Passing of Arthur* on, that is from 1869, that Tennyson had changed his conception of the story. The struggle of an ideal hero against an evil world could not fail to suggest the analogy of the human Soul fighting its way to the eternal Good. Arthur is no longer son to Uther, but mysteriously wafted to the shores of earth from out the great ocean; educated by the intellect of Merlin; married in the senses to Guinevere; he is crowned in the presence of Religion and the Christian virtues, girt with the sword of the Spirit, gives order and direction to the powers of man, and wars against the lawlessness of the world. Hence it is that the poet himself on the virtual completion of the series, inscribing it to the Queen, wrote:—

‘Accept this old imperfect tale,
New-old, and *shadowing Sense at war with Soul*
Rather than that gray king, whose name, a ghost,
Streams like a cloud, man-shaped, from mountain-peak,
And cleaves to cairn and cromlech still; or him
Of Geoffrey's book, or him of Malleor's, one
Touch'd by the adulterous finger of a time
That hover'd between war and wantonness,
And crownings and dethronements.’

One cannot escape from these words of the poet. They show that to him the story of Arthur was the old story, but now new with a spiritual strength and meaning foreign to the old story, and Arthur himself not the king, tainted by the vices of Geoffrey's time or Malory's, but rather the Soul, the Spiritual Ideals, the Conscience of Man warring against, and warred against by, the evil of the world. Fortunately, however, the poet found himself bound to the plain course of the old narrative and was in the main committed to it before his allegorical scheme was matured. The result is that there is only an imperfect blending of the romance and the allegory. In *The Holy Grail*, where the story is almost wholly invented by the poet, the allegory naturally is supreme, and the whole poem rests its meaning and power on its splendid symbolism. Elsewhere, however, even in the later idylls, the romantic story is supreme, and so fascinates the imagination of the poet and of his readers that the allegory fades away before human life so artistically, so wonderfully portrayed. Indeed the intrusion of the allegory can fairly be regarded as an artistic mistake, impeding, where it crops up, the natural progress of the story and dulling our interest in the humanity of its personages. On the whole, therefore, *The Idylls* are the tragedy of Arthur, the growth and downfall of his power through the sin of his wife and the superstition of his knights; but in part the story shadows forth a second story, the struggle of the Soul that strives to attain the goal of its ideals and remain true to its divine mission of ruling the faculties of man. In *The Holy Grail* alone is the poem a tissue of allegory.

The symbolism in *The Grail* and the slight allegorical touches in the *Morte d'Arthur* are commented on in the Notes.

NOTES.

1, 1.—**The Holy Grail.** The word 'grail' occurs in various forms in Middle English, *graal*, *grayle*, etc. These all go back to O.Fr. *graal*, *greil*, *grasal*; these in turn to the Late

Lat. *gradalis*, *grasale*, a corruption of *cratella*, diminutive of the Lat. *crater* (meaning a large bowl or vase in which wine and water were mixed before serving to guests). Ancient writers treat it either as the flat vessel for holding food, 'the holy dish wherein I ate the lamb on Sher-thursday' (Malory, xvii, 20), or as the cup in the Last Supper (see note 3, 4). The association of the Welsh magic cauldron with the Christian vessel, and of Bran, lord of the under-world, confused with Bron, legendary hero of the conversion of Wales, with Joseph of Arimathea, the legendary hero of the conversion of England, is referred to, pp. 112, 115f. The properties of the Grail are properties originally material, bringing food to all who behold it (see note 3, 9) and healing all wounds (cf. "The Holy Grail," 3, 13); but it soon acquired under Christian influence great spiritual power as well. It separates the pure from the impure, affording the former the greatest spiritual delight. With some writers it is the symbol of ascetic longing and its attainment is possible only to the ascetically pure; with others it is the symbol of the noblest efforts of human aspiration and love.

PERCIVALE AND AMBROSIUS.

1, 2.—**noiseful arms.** 'Noisy' as contrasted with the 'silent life of prayer,' also suggesting the fame of the bearer whose deeds are 'noised' abroad.

1, 2.—**prowess** (*prow'ess*). Valour, bravery. (The word is formed from the O. Fr. adj. *prou* (Fr. *preux*), valiant.)

1, 3.—**tournament or tilt.** Strictly the 'tilt' was the exercise of charging with lance on an opponent or a mark; the 'joust' (*jüst*) involved the single combat of two knights on horseback; the 'tournament' required several combatants on each side, all engaged at once.

1, 3.—**Sir Percivale.** Also in Welsh *Peredur*, the original hero of the Grail legend, as his name shows, Celtic *per*, dish, *cyfaill* companion (=Percivale); or Welsh *per*, dish, *redur*, contracted to *edur*, companion (*Peredur*). As such he appears

in such early versions as those of Chrétien de Troies and Wolfram von Eschenbach (see p. 115). In later stories as in Malory, the hero of the Grail is Galahad, son to Lancelot and Elaine, daughter of King Pellam. Percivale meets us but little in the other idylls:—

‘So Arthur had the meek Sir Percivale.

—*Lancelot and Elaine.*

‘A sober man is Percivale and pure ;

For, look upon his face !—but if he sinn’d,
The sin that practice burns into the blood,
And not the one dark horror which brings remorse,
Will brand us after of whose fold we be !

—*Merlin and Vivien.*

Note carefully how Tennyson while following Malory, is attracted towards the knightly and human Percivale rather than to the unhuman Galahad, and unconsciously reinstates Percivale in the chief place.

1, 5.—**silent life...alms.** Cf. “Sir Percivale yielded him to an hermitage out of the city, and took a religious clothing.” Malory, xvii, 22. It was no unusual thing for the Christian warrior in his last years to renounce the world and enter a monastery. The ‘silent’ life, since silence except on stated occasions was a principal duty of a monk.

1, 6.—**cowl.** The hood of the dress of Western monks, here symbolic of the monastic life.

1, 8.—**Camelot.** The geography of the original Arthurian localities is a vast ground of disputation, one party holding to South and West Britain, the other to Cumbria and South Scotland. So far as Tennyson is concerned, we need trouble ourselves but little, as he makes no attempt to give local colouring to his scenes. “There is not one touch of the real world in all the scenery that Tennyson invents in his poem. It belongs throughout to that country which eye has not seen nor ear heard, but which the heart of man has imagined. It is more than invented landscape. It often breathes the atmosphere of the fairy lands, and of those dreams which open

the spaceless realms beyond our senses."—Stopford Brooke, p. 256.

Camelot, 'that is Winchester' (Malory), was the southern capital of Arthur's kingdom. Tennyson imagines it on the Thames, apparently, judging from *Lancelot and Elaine*, above London and below Astolat, which Malory however, associated with 'Gilford' ('now in English called Gilford') (Guildford) (xviii, 8). Strachey gives in his Introduction interesting local legends of Queen-Camel, Somersetshire, where the visitor is shown Arthur's Bridge, Arthur's Well, Arthur's Causeway, and the circle of Arthur's Round Table. Various scenes and traditions of the Arthurian story in Wales form an interesting book by Wirt Sikes, *British Goblins: Welsh Folk-Lore*, etc.

The 'abbey far away from Camelot' is roughly located by Tennyson in *Pelleas and Ettare*. Pelleas riding madly from Ettare's castle 'for half the night' reaches the abbey 'where Percivale was cowl'd.' Ettare's castle, since she was lost in the Forest of Dean (above the Severn, in the west corner of Gloucestershire), when journeying to the jousts at Carleon (on the Usk in Monmouthshire, Wales), must have lain some short distance east of the Forest.

1, 10.—**Ambrosius.** A character not in Malory, but made necessary when Tennyson imagines Percivale as narrator of the story.

1, 10.—**beyond the rest.** Note a favourite device of the poet's—a musical echo of the preceding line.

1, 11.—**wrought.** A poetic archaism. 'Wrought' is only a metathesized form of 'worked,' A. S. *worhte, wrohte*.

1, 12.—**love that waken'd love.** Cf. 1. John 4. 19.

1, 14.—**world-old.** This intensive use of 'world'='exceedingly,' 'reaching back into the ages' is a happy stroke and thoroughly English. In Anglo-Saxon we have *weorld-eald*, 'exceedingly old.'

1, 14.—**yew-tree...puffed...into smoke.** The yew is an evergreen tree with rough, thick trunk and dense, dark foliage. Its long life and sombre colour have made it a favourite tree

for planting in the neighbourhood of churches and cloisters. So naturally the poet describes the yew near the grave of Hallam (*In Memoriam*, ii., quoted in the Appendix). The phenomenon of the smoking yew-tree is noted by the poet elsewhere in that poem :

‘Old warder of these buried bones,
And answering now my random stroke
With fruitful cloud and living smoke,
Dark yew, that graspest at the stones.’ etc.

—*In Memoriam*, xxxix.

These verses, says Bayne, have an interest as illustrating Tennyson’s minute attention to natural facts—an attention almost too minute to be followed by ordinary observers, p. 518. The explanation is : ‘ The stamen-bearing flowers of the yew are covered with an abundant yellow pollen, which the wind disperses. Each flower sends up its little puff of sulphur-coloured smoke. Thus the pistil-bearing flowers which, like small acorns, grow apart from the stamen-bearing ones, receive the pollen. This smoking of the yew, which belongs more to March than April, seized on Tennyson’s observing fancy.’ Stopford Brooke, p. 332, *n*.

1. 15.—**cloisters**. The cloister (Fr. *cloistre*, L. *claustrum*, enclosure) is an arched way or covered walk running round the walls of parts of monastic and collegiate buildings. It usually has a wall on one side, and on the other a series of arcades with piers and columns, or an open colonnade, surrounding an interior grassy court.

2. 1.—**pale**. The bounds of the monastery. (Fr. *pal*, L. *palus*, stake.)

2. 6.—**thro’**. The poet often inclines towards a phonetic spelling. Cf. ‘crost,’ 2, 12 ; ‘prest,’ 12, 2, etc.

2. 7.—**Arthur’s hall**. The courtesy of Arthur’s knights was proverbial. Yniol says to Geraint :—

‘by your state
And presence might have guess’d you one of those
That eat in Arthur’s hall at Camelot.’

—*The Marriage of Geraint*.

The hall is described in *The Holy Grail*, p. 10 f.

2, 9. — **coins...image of the king.** The knights have all the forms and external marks of breeding, whatever they be at heart. The same comparison is used in *Aylmer's Field*, 162,

‘A childly way with children, and a laugh
Ringing like proven golden coinage true.’

2, 11. — **Table Round.** The order of the words grows out of the French order, ‘table ronde’ in Wace’s *Brut* (see p. 114). Cf. ‘Siege perilous,’ 8, 5. According to Malory, the Table Round was given by Uther Pendragon to King Leodogran and by him, as dowry with his daughter Guinevere, to Arthur. With the Table went one hundred knights, though it required fifty more to be complete (iii, 1, but according to xxi. 13, always one hundred and forty completed it). Arthur fulfilled the number of knights, except that no one sat in the Siege Perilous (see note 8, 5). Merlin had made the Table “in tokening of the roundness of the world, for by the Round Table is the world signified by right” (xiv, 2). Tennyson has Arthur describe the fair Order of the Round Table:—

‘A glorious company, the flower of men,
To serve as model for the mighty world,
And be the fair beginning of a time.
I made them lay their hands in mine and swear
To reverence their king, as if he were
Their conscience, and their conscience as their king,
To break the heathen and uphold the Christ,
To ride abroad redressing human wrongs,
To speak no slander, no, nor listen to it,
To honour his own word as if his God’s,
To lead sweet lives in purest chastity,
To love one maiden only, cleave to her,
And worship her by years of noble deeds
Until they won her.....

—Guinevere.

This symbolism of the Table and the world, he repeats .

‘But now the whole ROUND TABLE is dissolved
That was an image of the mighty world.’

—*Morte d'Arthur*, p. 91, l. 16.

2, 16.—**heats that spring and sparkle.** A favourite comparison with Tennyson to indicate a temporary passion. Cf.

“Some heat of difference sparkled out.”

—*Aylmer's Field.*

Notice how well the metaphor suggests wasted passion, by the sparks from the forge, of which nothing comes as against the passion for spiritual good. It would be better, thought the knight, to turn men's desire of praise, their devotion to women, their longing to excel, towards things more worthy and more lasting than victory in the jousts.

2, 17.—**jousts.** See note 1, 3.

2, 18.—**spiritual.** Note the slurring of unaccented syllables.

The Frame-Work of "The Holy Grail."—The Idyll takes the form of a dialogue, in which Ambrosius is the questioner and Percivale the narrator of the story. This enables the poet to impart a greater air of verisimilitude to the recital of miraculous occurrences than he might have felt able to do if he had told the tale himself.—*Littledale*, p. 219f. “The frame-work of the tale could not be better conceived. Sir Percivale who has known the great world tells the story to Ambrosius, a simple brother of the monastery who knows nothing but his village. This invention enables Tennyson constantly to contrast the exalted with the simple type of mind, the earth-loving with the heaven-loving soul. Again, we hear in the remarks of Ambrosius the same views as those which Arthur held concerning the Quest, given, not in the high words of the King, but in the simple thoughts of the uneducated monk who loved the daily life of men. This was a happy thought of the artist. It leads up to and doubles the force of Arthur's view of the matter—that is, Tennyson's decision of the whole question. An inner unity is also given to the story and its various episodes, which otherwise would be too unconnected, by their being knit up into the one tale of Percivale. We never lose the image of the quiet war-worn knight, sitting with Ambrosius in the cloister. Even the unity of place is thus preserved. The great adventures and

the great adventurers, the city of Camelot, the pictured hall and the fierce vision of the Grail that went through it, the ride of Percivale, the passing of Galahad, the wild voyage of Lancelot, are all brought into the still enclosure where the two peaceful figures sit in the sun."—Stopford Brooke, p. 331f.

THE HOLY GRAIL.

2, 21.—**green in heaven's eyes** Cf. Ps. 37. 35. They are full of spiritual life and vigour in the sight of heaven, though they are almost dead to what goes on in the world without their pale. The monk would, of course, not know of the Grail from his holy books.

2, 23.—**one of your own knights.** See later for Sir Bors's story, noting especially p. 29. He was 'sorrowing for our Lancelot, Because his former madness had returned.' p. 27.

2, 24.—**refectory.** A hall or apartment in monasteries and convents for light repasts. (Late Lat. *refectorium*, L. *reficere*.)

3. 3.—**what phantom?** 'What mean you by calling it a 'phantom'?' Note the feeling in Percivale's mind, indicated by his addressing his brother-monk as 'monk' and by challenging his word 'phantom.'

3, 4.—**cup.** Tennyson departs from Malory (see note 1, 1.) The legend, as in the French prose *Joseph of Arimathæa* (ll. 140–212), tells how when Jesus was taken captive in the house of Simon, a Jew found there the vessel in which the pascal lamb had been sacrificed by Christ. The day after Christ's trial, this Jew brought the dish to Pilate, who knowing Joseph's feeling towards the Saviour, in turn gave it to him. When Jesus was dying on the cross, Joseph, remembering his vessel, put it beneath the wounds, so that he 'received the blood of the wounds of the feet and of the hands and of the side in the vessel.' The dish then had miraculous powers.

Some of the Grail stories explain the Grail as the cup of the Last Supper (Matt. 26, 27). Tennyson's reason for following these was, no doubt, to render the story more intelligible,

perhaps more credible, certainly spiritually stronger by associating it with the mystery of the Sacrament, in which our century believes, rather than with a forgotten superstition.

3. 6.—**land of Aromat.** Tennyson's poetical form of Arimathæa. It is the town (not a land), Ramleh, twenty miles north-west of Jerusalem. The Hebrew Ramathaim was given in the Septuagint as Armathaim, in the Greek Testament as Arimathæa.

This was the native place of the "rich man," the "honourable counsellor" (Mark 15. 43), the "good man and just" (Luke 23. 50), the "disciple of Jesus" (John 19. 38), who buried Christ's body, and about whom the mediæval legend naturally grew.

3. 7.—**day of darkness.** See Luke 23. 44. 45.

3. 7.—**dead Went wandering.** See Matt. 27. 52, 53.

3. 8.—**Moriah.** The mount on which stands the Temple of Jerusalem.

3. 9.—**Arimathæan Joseph.** The story of Joseph has been partly given in notes 3, 4 and 3, 6. The legend further narrates how he was imprisoned by the Jews, miraculously fed by the Grail, and how, when delivered by Christ, he took ship for England to christianize that island. Along with the Grail, as we learn in *Balin and Balan*, he brought

‘Thorns of the crown and shivers of the cross,
And therewithal (for thus he told us) brought
By holy Joseph hither, that same spear
Wherewith the Roman pierced the side of Christ.’

The first church which, according to tradition, Joseph founded in England, was built at Glastonbury in 60 A.D., and there he was buried.

3. 10.—**winter thorn Blossoms.** "A variety of hawthorn which puts forth leaves and flowers about Christmastide. This variety is said to have originated at Glastonbury Abbey, and the original thorn was believed to have been the staff with which Joseph of Arimathæa aided his steps in his wanderings from the Holy Land to Glastonbury." (Ogilvy, quoted by

Little Dale), and which he stuck in the ground when he stopped to take rest on the hill-top. "The original tree was destroyed during the civil wars, but grafts from it still flourish in the neighbouring gardens."

3, 10.—**Glastonbury.** Twenty-five miles s. w. of Bath, on the river Brue in Somersetshire. The abbey, now in ruins, once occupied sixty acres and at the dissolution of the monasteries was one of the richest in the country. "According to tradition, King Arthur and his queen Guinevere were buried in the cemetery of the Abbey, and Giraldus Cambrensis (1146-1220) states that a leaden cross, bearing the following inscription, "Hic jacet sepultus inclytus Rex Arthurus in insula Avallonia," was found under a stone seven feet below the surface, and nine feet below this was found an oaken coffin, containing dust and bones." This disinterment took place by order of Henry II. (*Chambers's Ency.*) However, the story has no historic value.

3, 12.—**bode.** 'Remained' 'abode.' Tennyson generally used the strong form, but the weak verb transitively—

'Like the tenderest-hearted maid
That ever bided tryst at village stile.'
—*Merlin and Vivien.*

3, 17.—**To whom the monk.** A classical, and especially Vergilian, epic touch in omitting the verb preceding a quotation. Cf.

Aeolus hæc contra: 'Tuus, o regina, quid optes
Explorare labor.
—Vergil, *Aeneid* i., 76.

Aeolus (*said*) these things in reply: etc.

3, 19.—**the heathen prince, Arviragus.** Probably an historical character, though we have only tradition for holding that he reigned king of the Britons from 41 to 72 A.D. He figures in Shakspeare as one of the two sons of Cymbeline.

3, 20.—**isle of marsh.** The river Brue or Brent at one part of its course forms a peninsula or island, called the Isle of Avalon. On this 'isle' the Abbey was founded.

3, 21.—**wattles.** Twigs and flexible rods, which woven through uprights, could form imperfect walls.

3, 22.—**yore.** 'Former years.' (A. S. *gēara*, (gen. pl., 'of years.' but used adverbially, 'formerly,' 'of yore.')

3, 24.—**far as I have read.** In the time the monk is supposed to have lived the Welsh basis of the magic cauldron, etc., had not yet been joined to the Christian legend of Joseph as the evangelist of Britain.

3, 25.—**to-day.** 'In our day' as contrasted with the 'days of yore.'

THE VISION OF PERCIVALE'S SISTER.

4, 3.—**sister.** Tennyson greatly develops the part Percivale's sister plays in the Grail legend. In Malory there is no hint of her early love (4, 5ff), nor of her seeing the Grail (pp. 4-6) and thus of her indirectly causing others to seek it. Tennyson's art in creating this character is almost as fine as is that in his Ambrosius.

4, 5.—**A holy maid.** Note the Tennysonian repetition from 4, 3.

4, 7.—**flame...blunted.** The metaphor is changed, without justification, from a flame to an arrow. The thought is a fine antithesis to Percivale's thought.

'The early heats that spring and sparkle
.....and waste the spiritual strength,' 2, 16ff.

4, 11.—**scandal of the Court,** etc. See the summary of the Idylls, p. 120 ff., and the quotation from *Guinevere* in note 4, 13.

4, 13.—**strange sound of an adulterous race.** Rumors of the deeds and sayings of a corrupt society, rumors utterly strange and foreign to her in the sanctuary of a convent. Arthur, at the last, realized this corruption, as he said to Guinevere:

'Then came thy shameful sin with Lancelot;
Then came the sin of Tristram and Isolt;
Then others, following these my mightiest knights
And drawing foul example from fair names,
Sinn'd also.'

—*Guinevere.*

4, 13.—**iron grating.** A picturesque touch, vividly recalling the conventual life, in which all intercourse with the outside world is held through iron gratings.

4, 15.—**beat.** Notice the forcible position of the verb. The word suggests the storm beating into the convent. It echoes (Macaulay) the lines in a former idyll of this very scandal:—

‘Nor yet was heard
The world’s loud whisper breaking into storm.’

—*Marriage of Geraint*

4, 16.—**he...sins.** Note the Tennysonian periphrasis, ‘her confessor.’

4, 18.—**winters.** The counting of time by ‘winters’ was in early English universal. It held its place against ‘years’ only in reference to aged persons or times of trouble, for which the word ‘winters’ seemed suggestive, while the poets naturally grew to counting the years of the young by springs or summers.

4, 22.—**From our Lord’s time.** Here we have the assumed chronology of the poems. Arthur’s reign (see page 112) ended with his death in 542. It is scarcely necessary to point out that the courtly chivalry of the Arthurian poems is that of the poets and warriors of the twelfth century rather than the semi-barbarism of the sixth. Similarly the thought, feeling, philosophy, morality of Tennyson’s Idylls are of the nineteenth century rather than the twelfth.

4, 24.—**surely he had thought.** That is, her confessor. ‘Surely,’ in sense, must be construed with ‘would come,’ treating ‘he had thought’ as almost a parenthesis.

5, 3.—**Nay.** The answer is, on the whole, affirmative, as we see from the line 5, 5; so that ‘nay’ really refers to a suppressed clause,—‘Nay, I know not why it should not come,’ thus presenting a negative answer to the doubt, signified by ‘might’ in the nun’s question.

5, 10.—**Beyond my knowing of them.** ‘Beyond what I had ever known them to be.’ Note the poet’s fondness, as exem-

plified in the repetition in the beginning of the following line, for a monotonous anaphora.

5. 16.—**horn from o'er the hills.** Tennyson had a special liking for the sound of a horn in the mountains, and often alludes to it. In the *Bugle-Song* in *The Princess*, the charm of the sound as heard over Killarney is marvellously caught.

'O hark, O hear! how thin and clear.

And thinner, clearer, farther going!

O sweet and far from cliff and scar

The horns of Elfland faintly blowing!

Blow, let us hear the purple glens replying:

Blow, bugle: answer, echoes, dying, dying, dying.

5. 18.—**To hunt by moonlight.** Yet legend has blended Arthur with the Spectral Huntsman. Gervase of Tilbury (1212) says that in the woods of Britain the foresters tell that on alternate days, about noon or at midnight when the moon is full and shining, they often see an array of hunters with dogs and sound of horns, who, in answer to the enquirers, say that they are of the household and fellowship of Arthur (from Strachey's Introduction).

5. 18.—**The slender sound.** This is as the sound of the bugle 'thin and clear' in the quotation in note 5. 16.

5. 19.—**distance beyond distance.** From a place far beyond what we call distance—hence an incredible, an infinite distance.

5. 21.—**aught...hand.** A characteristic expansion of the preceding line.

5. 23.—**a cold and silver beam.** Cf. the narrative of the appearance of the Grail to the Round Table. p. 8.

5. 25.—**beatings in it.** A Tennysonian touch, in harmony with his interpretation of the Grail as the sacramental cup. See 3, 4.

6. 2.—**faded...decay'd...died.** This metaphoric use of words not ordinarily applied to colours, gives fine variety of expression.

The Vision of Percivale's Sister.—"She sees the vision, and sees it through her own high-wrought and delicate passion. It comes attended by such music as an ethereal ear might hear

—as of a silver horn far off, blown o'er the hills, a slender sound, unlike any earthly music. And when the Grail streams through her cell, the beam down which it steals is silver-cold, as the maiden's heart sees it : but the Grail is rose-red ; in it are very beatings as of a living heart, and the white walls of her cell are dyed with rosy colours. Cold to earth, ecstatic to heaven ; it is the vision of a mystic maiden's passionate purity. And the verses are fitted to the vision." Stopford Brooke, p. 325.

GALAHAD.

6, 16.—**Galahad.** According to Malory (xi. 2), Galahad was the son of Lancelot and Elaine, King Pellam's daughter, to whom dame Brisen by her magic had given the appearance of Queen Guinevere, so that Lancelot might be induced to visit her. Pellam's desire in using this magical device, was, as Lancelot and himself were of the kin of Joseph of Arimathæa, that there should be born a son who "should be named Sir Galahad, the good knight, by whom all the foreign country should be brought out of danger, and by him the Holy Grail should be achieved" (xi. 3).

6, 15.—**one...ever moved.** This sense of 'ever' = 'always' is archaic.

The omission of the subject relative is likewise characteristic of Middle English and Early Modern English. So in Shakspere,

'I have a mind presages me such thrift.'

—*Merchant of Venice*, I. i. 176.

6, 16.—**in white armour.** Symbolic of utter purity. Tennyson spiritualizes the character. He sweeps away the unpleasant story of his birth as the talk of 'chatterers' (7, 2) ; invents the mystical relations between him and Percivale's sister. In Malory, Galahad was reared by twelve nuns, and knighted, though only a youth of, some say, fifteen, by Lancelot, with the words, "God make him a good man, for beauty faileth you not as any that liveth" (xiii. 1). He endures

many battles, finally becoming king of Sarras in the spiritual place. In Sarras he sees the Grail, receives the Saviour in his bodily form and thus achieves the quest. There he dies and there his body is buried by Bors and by Percivale, who then becomes a monk (xvii. 22, 23.) Tennyson's early lyric *Sir Galahad*, quoted in the Appendix, shows the early hold the figure of this virgin Christian knight had on his imagination. The side of human life that he represents and Tennyson's estimate of it are commented on below.

6. 18.—*dubb'd him knight*. 'Dubb' is lit. 'to strike,' but with particular reference to the slight blow in the shoulder (or rarely the cheek) with the flat of the sword, which concluded the ceremony of investiture.

7, 1. — *Lancelot*.—Lancelot. in Malory, was the son of King Ban of Benwick (Brittany) and of the lineage of Joseph of Arimathæa. In infancy he was the nursling of the Lady of the Lake, hence his name Lancelot of the Lake. In previous Idylls of the series, Lancelot played an important part. He fought side by side with Arthur for King Leodogran and the two,

'For each had wardèd either in the fight,
Swore on the field of death a deathless love.'

To Lancelot, the knight most loved and honoured, was given the charge of bringing Guinevere from her father's court to Arthur—a fatal embassy, for at first she thought him, as we learn later, the king himself, and they loved. Suspicions of this love awoke and spread in the Court. They were the reason of the cruel trials that Geraint laid on Enid; the fatal truth in them brought about the death of Balin and Balan; they made a flagrant story when Vivien related them to Merlin; and the fatal love itself stood in the way of Lancelot loving Elaine, and caused her death. But so far there was no proof, and the loyal mind of Arthur knew nothing, suspected nothing of this love. So matters were at the time of the coming of the Grail.

In the scheme of the Allegory. Maccallum seeks to identify the place of Lancelot with that of the Imagination, "or if it

be preferred, of men of imaginative temperament, in the life of the world," p. 335.

7, 3.—**birds of passage.** Swallows, which in the colder climates are migratory birds. Their lively twittering and rapid flight in pursuit of flies are well-known characteristics.

7, 4.—**they come.** Refers to the 'chatterers,' who are trifling people flocking to court from unknown parts, spending their time in gossip and swallowing of gossip; as their lives are without permanence their tales should be unheeded.

7, 5.—**wanderingly lewd.** Given to licentious love of many women, 'letting his passions wander to any casual object.' Fated as Lancelot was to love of Guinevere, and fatal as that love was, he 'loved but one only,' and when he died 'a holy man,' his brother could well address him in the words of the noblest praise ever given to any man:—

"Ah, Launcelet, he said, thou were head of all christian knights; and now I dare say, said Sir Ector, thou Sir Launcelet, there thou liest, that thou were never matched of earthly knight's hand; and thou were the courtliest knight that ever bare shield; and thou were the truest friend to thy lover (friend) that ever bestrode horse; and thou were the truest lover of a sinful man that ever loved woman; and thou were the kindest man that ever strake with sword; and thou were the goodliest person ever came among peers of knights; and thou were the meekest man and the greatest that ever ate in hall among ladies; and thou were the sternest knight to thy mortal foe, that ever put spear in the rest." (Malory, xxi. 13.)

7, 10.—**a strong sword and belt.** In Malory, Galahad, in quest of the Grail, finds in a ship a mysterious and fateful sword. The girdle was poor and weak, and only a chaste maiden, daughter of a king or queen, could do away with the girdle. Percivale's sister, who with her brother and Bors were on the ship, then "opened a box. and took out girdles which were seemly wrought with golden threads, and upon that were set full precious stones, and a rich buckle of gold. Lo, lords, said she, here is a girdle that ought to be set about the sword. And wit ye well the greatest part of this girdle was made of my hair, which I loved well when I was a woman in the world. But as soon as I wist that this adventure was ordained me, I

clipped off my hair and made this girdle in the name of God. Then went the gentlewoman and set it on the girdle of the sword....and then she girt him about the middle with the sword:—‘Now reck I not though I die, for now I hold me one of the blessed maidens of the world, which hath made the worthiest knight of the world. Damsel, said Galahad, ye have done so much that I shall be your knight all the days of my life’ (xvii. 7). The changes Tennyson makes are significant. The girding on of the sword is no longer a separate episode, but is brought close to the ceremony of the knighting of Galahad. Thus without marring the unity of the story, a picturesque addition is made. Yet more striking is the spiritualizing of the story. The poet seizes on the incident for its spiritual import. It becomes to him a symbol of a sort of consecration to the work of the Church Militant, a laying on of hands, a confirmation of religious belief that is to lead Galahad surely to the Heavenly City.

7, 14.—**my knight, my love.** The spiritual ecstasy that uses the language of earth for a passion without anything of earth in it is wonderfully depicted in *St. Agnes’ Eve*, quoted in the Appendix.

7, 16.—**round thee, maiden.** This use of ‘maiden’ as applied to a man may be illustrated by a similar use of ‘virgin.’ Arthur speaking to Guinevere says,

‘O Guinevere,
For I was ever virgin save for thee.’
—*Guinevere*.

7, 18.—**break thro’ all.** A figure from the contest of the jousts, = ‘conquer all.’

7, 19.—**in the spiritual city.** Cf. 20, 17. According to Malory, the goal of Galahad’s quest was the city of Sarras (see note 6, 16), which was ‘in the spiritual place’; it had been the scene of our Lord’s succour of Joseph of Arimathæa (xvii. 20). ‘and there Galahad became king and achieved the Grail (xvii. 20, 22). Tennyson symbolizes as before. The ‘spiritual city’ is to him the heavenly Jerusalem.

7, 20.—sent the deathless passion....belief. The same thought is repeated in 20, 20 f.

‘While thus he spake, his eye, dwelling on mine,
Drew me, with power upon me, till I grew
One with him, to believe as he believed.’

Tainsh does not like the thought of the passage: “Spiritual commissions do not so derive... This is almost the language of Mesmerism, of mesmeric, of hypnotic suggestion, whatever these grave-sounding words may mean. If the poet had intended us to think that the whole thing was spiritually unclean, the language would be intelligible. But as no such intention appears in the poem, the words are distressing,” p. 221.

THE SIEGE PERILOUS.

8, 1.—**Merlin.** In the romances, Merlin was a devil’s son, the offspring of a demon and a nun. According to one account, the devil thought to frustrate by Merlin’s birth the scheme of Christ’s incarnation; but the child was baptized by Bleys, and his thoughts, which had all the wisdom of the serpent, were turned to the service of Arthur and of good. The story of his making the Round Table is alluded to in note 2, 11; his “passing away,” *i.e.* his imprisonment through the wiles of Vivien, is referred to on p. 121f.

In the scheme of the Allegory, Merlin is generally regarded as typifying the intellect of man, untouched by spiritual power. “Merlin,” according to Elsdale, “represents the creative and inventive faculty, the powers of thought and imagination with all that they involve. He, therefore, knows all arts,” p. 26. “His strength lies in intellect apart from, though not necessarily in antagonism with, religion. He is a philosopher and a keen-spirited observer. He is a searcher after the true and the beautiful,” p. 40. “Merlin,” says Maccallum, “typifies the assistance which every new principle must receive from the ‘natural magic’ of the intellect, that pays homage to the ideal and labours on behalf of the highest,” p. 336.

8, 5.—**Siege Perilous.** Fr. = 'perilous chair.' The Fr. *siège* is connected with L. *sedes*. "They...said to Merlin:...thou shouldst ordain by thy crafts a siege that no man should sit in it but he all only that shall pass all other knights...Then he made the siege perilous" (xiv. 2). "In the Siege Perilous [said Merlin to Arthur,] there shall sit no man therein but one, and if there be any so hardy to do it he shall be destroyed, and he that shall sit there shall have no fellow" (iii. 4). At Pentecost of that year the knights found written on the seat: 'Four hundred winters and fifty-four accomplished after the passion of our Lord Jesus Christ ought this siege to be fulfilled' (xiii. 2.). At dinner an old knight brought in Galahad, and when the cloth covering the chair was lifted they read, "This is the siege of Galahad the haut (=high) prince." "And then he set him down surely in that siege: Then all the knights of the Round Table marvelled them greatly of Sir Galahad, that he durst sit in that siege perilous, and was so tender of age, and wist not from whence he came, but all only of God, and said, This is he by whom the Sancgreal shall be achieved, for there never sat none but he, but he were mischieved" (xiii. 4).—*Malory*.

"Perilous" is used in a neutral sense (as originally 'ominous,' 'success,' etc. were). The chair possesses a fateful power that results in either evil or good to the man who tries it.

In some legends the Round Table and the Siege Perilous are held to be the table and chair at which and in which the Lord sat at the Last Supper. Out of verses like 1 Cor. 11. 28 f.:—But let a man examine himself, and so let him eat of that bread and drink of that cup. For he that eateth and drinketh unworthily, eateth and drinketh damnation to himself, not discerning the Lord's body—it was easy to develop the legend of a Siege Perilous, as in *Malory*, where we are told, men were suddenly destroyed who rashly sat in the chair.

The Allegory.—The symbolism of the chair is fruitful of difficulty. In *Malory* it is one of many objects endued with mystical properties, serving, according to middle-age notions, to

designate the chosen, the elect, the royally born, etc. In Tennyson this mediæval idea is replaced by an allegorical meaning. What the meaning is depends on these points:—Merlin's death, Galahad's occupancy of the chair, and the description of the siege itself. The first is of no value, since the words are Percivale's, not the poet's, and most probably represent simply the current theory of Merlin's disappearance, held by Round Table people who did not know the truth as we know it from *Merlin and Vivien*. So Percivale says his loss was 'by misadventure,' which could not well apply to the facts of his enchantment by Vivien. When Galahad thinks to essay the chair, he in his words, 'If I lose myself, I save myself,' echoes the words of Christ, "He that findeth his life shall lose it; and he that loseth his life for my sake shall find it." (Matt. 10. 39; see also John 12. 25.) To Galahad, then, it was the Chair of Self-renunciation, of Forgetfulness of Self. So the hermit interpreted it, for he reproaches Percivale (19, 16), puffed up with pride in his knightly powers, that he had not true humility, had not lost himself like Galahad. Galahad's action symbolizes that divine rashness that accepts all perils of worldly failure, disgrace and unhappiness, trusting in faith on the unseen power and approval of God.

The views of different commentators vary greatly:

"We are, I presume, to understand the chair to represent allegorically the chair of *knowledge*. It is fashioned by Merlin, who symbolises the powers of Intellect and Imagination, and it may be taken as the product of his life-long researches and superhuman insight. The strange figures carved on it denote, perhaps, the strange mysteries and phenomena which arise in the changeable course of things in this world; whether they be those of an impenetrable Past, of a mysterious Present, or of an inscrutable Future. Into these the eye of the gifted seer has a deeper insight than that of ordinary men. And the scroll of unintelligible letters which runs through them we may take to be the hidden meaning and true design of it all—the eternal purpose of the great Author, which are hidden from

the eyes of all living. The chair is perilous for good and ill, because the acquisition of knowledge involves increased capacities and responsibilities, whether for good or for evil. For whoever sits in the chair cannot remain as he was before. He must go forward to higher perfection, or backward to deeper failure. In either case he loses his old self. Merlin sat in it and was lost, because his discernment of Vivien's guile was unaccompanied by sufficient moral reprobation and firmness of will to prevent him from falling into her snare. Galahad will lose himself to save himself, because he loses his share in this world and all that it has to offer, in order that he may be crowned "King, far in the spiritual city." Elsdale, p. 62 f.

"Tennyson plainly intends it to indicate the temptations of 'sense.'"—Littledale, p. 224.

"Let us go back to the legend according to which the vacant seat represented Christ himself at the Last Supper with his apostles, and therefore it was presumption to be punished with destruction if any sat in it except those for whom it was destined. These then who set themselves as a guiding light to men in matters of the highest spiritual import, if they cannot entirely cast away self are lost, as Merlin was lost; but when the promised deliverer appears who sacrifices himself wholly for men, then, as in the time of the Saviour, comes the year of miracle." Macaulay, p. xviii.

8, 8.—**by misadvertence.** A word of Tennyson's coinage. It is more than 'inadvertence,' suggesting the ill results of inadvertence.

8, 10.—**Merlin's doom.** Not "the judgment pronounced by Merlin, that no man could sit there but he should lose himself" (Macaulay), but simply the alleged fate of Merlin, told in the preceding line.

8, 12.—**summer night.** Compare the season in *Morte d'Arthur*, 82, 2. There is a regular progress of the scenic background of the *Idylls*, making a wonderfully effective harmony with the regular progress of the story. *The Grail* with its sudden tempests, thunderstorms, is one of the summer

idylls. This progression of the seasons, the twelve Idylls, with the disappearance of Arthur with the old year, vaguely suggests the interpretation of Arthur as a symbol of the sun; but of course the allegory remains only a suggestion.

The Seasons in the Idylls.—"We go from the marriage season of spring in the "Coming of Arthur," when the blossom of the May seems to spread its perfume over the whole scene, to the early summer of the honeysuckle in "Gareth," the quickly following mowing-season of "Geraint," and the sudden summer-thunder-shower of "Vivien"—thence to the "full summer" of "Elaine," with oriel casements "standing wide for heat"—and later, to the sweep of equinoctial storms and broken weather of the "Holy Grail." Then come the autumn roses and brambles of "Pelleas," and in the "Last Tournament" the close of autumn-tide, with all its "slowly mellowing avenues," through which we see Sir Tristram riding to his doom. In "Guinevere" the creeping mists of coming winter pervade the picture. and in the "Passing of Arthur" we come to "deep mid-winter on the frozen hills." and the end of all, on the year's shortest day (taken as the end of the year)—"that day when the great light of heaven burned at his lowest in the rolling year." The king, who first appears "on the night of the New Year," disappears into the dawning light of "the new sun bringing the New Year," and thus the whole action of the poem is comprised precisely within the limits of the one principal and ever recurring cycle of time." *Contemp. Rev.* xxi. (1873), p. 938 ff.

8, 14.—would. This gives, by a touch, a notion of the momentous, fateful nature of the action.

THE GRAIL IN ARTHUR'S HALL.

8, 15.—and all at once, etc. Tennyson heightens the effect by attaching the appearance of the Grail to Galahad's taking his seat, which in Malory was not followed by any miracle. The picture of the Grail scene is closely copied. "... Upon that

to supper, and every knight sat in his own place as they were toforehand. Then anon they heard a cracking and a crying of thunder, that them thought the place should all to-drive (collapse). In the midst of this blast entered a sun-beam more clearer by seven times than ever they saw day, and all they were alighred (illuminated) of the grace of the Holy Ghost. Then began every knight to behold other, and either saw other by their seeming fairer than ever they saw afore. Not for then there was no knight might speak one word a great while, and so they looked every man on other, as they had been dumb. Then there entered into the hall the Holy Grail covered with white samite, but there was none might see it, nor who bare it. And there was all the hall full filled with good odours, and every knight had such meats and drinks as he best loved in this world; and when the Holy Grail had been borne through the hall, then the holy vessel departed suddenly, that they wist not where it became (what became of it). Then had they all breath to speak. And then the king yielded thankings unto God. . . Now, said Sir Gawaine. . . we might not see the holy Graile, it was so preciously covered: wherefore I will make here avow, that to-morn, without longer abiding, I shall labour in the quest of the Sanc-greale (holy Grail), that I shall hold me out a twelve-month and a day, or more if need be, and never shall I return again unto the court till I have seen it more openly than it hath been seen here: and if I may not speed (succeed), I shall return again as he that may not be against the will of our Lord Jesus Christ. When they of the Table Round heard Sir Gawaine say so, they arose up the most party, and made such avows as Sir Gawaine had made.

Anon as king Arthur heard this he was greatly displeased, for he wist well that they might not againsay (break) their avows. Alas! said king Arthur unto Gawaine. . . through you ye have bereft me of the fairest fellowship and the truest of knighthood that ever were seen together in any realm of the world. For when they depart from hence, I am sure they all

shall never meet more in this world, for they shall die many in the quest (Malory, xiii. 7).

8, 18—in the thunder was a cry. The cry was intelligible only to Galahad, as we see from 13, 4.

9, 1.—each at other. An archaic touch. This was the Middle English order, since which 'each' and 'other' have grown into 'each other.'

9, 2,—stood. Note the effectiveness of the initial place with subsequent pause; it vividly suggests the moment of dumb amazement. Cf. 4, 15, etc.

9, 2.—sware. The old Northern dialect form, equivalent to the Southern 'swore.' It is, of course, archaic.

9, 5.—and a day. A sort of "day of grace," common in reckoning time.

'For ever and ever, and one day more.'

—*The Window*, 147.

9, 8.—Sir Bors, Lancelot's cousin. The word 'cousin' was used freely in Middle-English = 'relative.' According to Malory (xi. 4), he was 'nephew unto Sir Launcelot,' though frequently (xi. 6) spoken of as a cousin.

9, 10.—Gawain...louder. Note this hint of Gawain's character, as Tennyson viewed it.

9, 13.—the King was not in hall. Cf. Malory in note 8, 15. The whole of the following episode is invented by Tennyson.

9, 15.—Scaped. An aphetic form of 'escaped.' Cf. Shakspeare,

'Of hair-breadth 'scapes i' the imminent deadly breach.'

—*Othello*, i. iii.

9, 17.—crying on help. Not 'crying out for help' (Macaulay). The construction occurs several times in Shakspeare:

The quarry cries on havoc.

—*Hamlet*, v. ii., 351.

Methought their souls, whose bodies Richard murder'd,
Came to my tent, and cried on victory.

—*Richard III.*, v. iii., 230.

What noise is this that cries on murder?

—*Othello*, v. 1., 62.

It is to be explained, 'to vociferate,' 'to exclaim,' 'to call loudly.'

9, 17.—**her shining hair.** A favourite epithet with the poet. It is (Macaulay) the *πλοκάμους φαεινοῖς*, the 'shining tresses,' in Homer, *Il.* 14, 176.

9, 18.—**either milky arm.** 'Either' quite properly used for 'each of two.' Cf. *The Lady of Shalott*, 49, 3.

"On either side the river lie."

'Milky' = 'milk-white,' is a favourite word with the poet :

'Every milky sail

On winding stream or distant sea.'

—*In Memoriam*, cxv.

'A milky-bell'd amaryllis blew.'

—*The Daisy*.

9, 19.—**Red-rent.** A good instance of the poet's power in word formation, a vivid touch, likewise—'torn till bloody.'

9, 20.—**leaves the rope.** Blown from the bolt-ropes that strengthened the edges of the sail.

9, 22.—**to smoke.** The metaphor is beautifully exact. The practice is to stupify bees with smoke, before the hive is broken in upon. 'Such honey' represents the violations of women's honour such as the maiden seeks redress for from Arthur.

9, 23.—**Howbeit.** An archaic touch = How (ever) it be = 'however.'

10, 2.—**darken under Camelot.** Camelot as we see in the following lines was built on a hill. So, when Gareth and his followers came towards the city, they stood first

'On the plain

That broaden'd toward the base of Camelot,

Far off they saw the silver-misty morn,

Rolling her smoke about the Royal mount.'

—*Gareth and Lynette*.

10, 4.—**thunder-smoke.** 'Dense black thunder clouds.' For the compound, cf.

'As thunder-drops fall on a sleeping sea.'

—*A Dream of Fair Women*.

10, 5.—**bolt.** In less scientific days it was thought that the thunder discharged a missile—the ‘thunder-stone’ of Shakspeare—usually termed the thunder-bolt.

10, 9.—**O brother.** The word marks a glow of fraternal feeling to the brother monk. Contrast 3, 3.

10, 9.—**had you known.** An abbreviated sentence=‘Had you known,...how you would have rejoiced.’ The sentence form is still usual with the addition of ‘only’—‘had you only know!’

10, 11.—**Camelot, And all the dim rich city.** The pictures of Camelot and Arthur’s Hall are entirely Tennyson’s. In *Gareth and Lynette* we get other touches of description :—

‘At times the summit of the high city flash’d;
At times the spires and turrets half way down
Prick’d thro’ the mist; at times the great gate shone;
Anon the whole fair city had disappeared...

Camelot, a city of shadowy palaces
And stately, rich in emblem and in work
Of ancient kings who did their days in stone,
Which Merlin’s hand, the mage at Arthur’s court,
Knowing all arts, had touch’d, and everywhere,
At Arthur’s ordinance, tipt with lessening peak
And pinnacle, and had made it spire to heaven.’

According to Merlin’s statement in that idyll :

‘The city is built
To music, therefore never built at all,
And therefore built forever.’

The epithets ‘dim,’ ‘shadowy,’ ‘rich,’ which the poet frequently applies to Camelot, suggest its beautifully decorated buildings rising aloft from the narrow streets.

Camelot in the Allegory. The shadowy city represents the lovely forms of the imagination in which the tendencies of man towards the ideal delight from age to age to clothe themselves, and which constitute the spiritual inheritance that one generation receives from another. They are dim, poetic, rising up in countless aspirations to God. “All those elevating and refining arts and sciences...these, with all that whole circle of un-

numbered influences. mental. moral, or religious, derived from the experiences of the past. with which they are associated. constitute the city in which the soul dwells.—the sphere in which it works. and the surrounding atmosphere which it breathes... The city is built to music: for. as the harmony and proportion of sound constitute music. so the harmony and proportion of all the various elements and powers which go to make up the man, will constitute a fitting shrine for the ideal soul. “Therefore never built at all”; for the process of assimilating and working up into one harmonious whole all the various external elements is continually going on. “Therefore built for ever”; for since harmonious and proportionate development is the continual law. the city will always be complete and at unity in itself.” Elsdale. p. 24 ff.

“The city in another sense may represent the state of spiritual and moral culture in the world during any epoch. Every generation has to build its own spiritual city for itself; ...it is not a permanent structure, but depends on the renewed efforts of generation after generation.” Littledale, p. 89.

“Camelot represents the gradual accretion of human belief and culture and institutions, the structure that the spirit of man has built for itself in its progress from the brute. But just because it is the work of generations of effort. much has become unsound and may be overthrown; just because it is human even the newest may be wrenched and endangered. And meanwhile the fabrics that have been reared are less important than the aspiration, the ideal, that is raising them.” Maccallum, p. 327.

10. 15.—the mighty hall. To the conception of the hall that is here given should be added that of a part of the interior in *Gareth and Lynette* :

‘Midway down the side of that long hall
A stately pile,—whereof along the front.
Some blazon’d. some but carven. and some blank,
There ran a treble range of stony shields.—
Rose. and high-arching overbrow’d the hearth.’

10, 16.—four great zones. Here. concentric bands, surrounding the outside of the hall.

10, 16.—betwixt. An archaic and provincial word. 'between.' (A. S. *betweohs*, *betwux*, 'between.' from *be* + *tweox*, 'by two.'—consequently going back to the same elements as 'between,' A. S. *betweonum*.)

10, 18 ff.—And in the lowest, etc. The parallel construction of the following lines suggests the regular character of the zones.

10, 22.—mould. Here, 'form,' as in

'Those niched shapes of noble mould.'

—*The Daisy*.

10, 24.—peaked wings...northern star. A hint of one of the myths of Arthur which associates him with *Arcturus* and the constellation of the Great Bear, the 'pointers' of which are always directed towards the North Star. (See note 28. 13.)

11, 2.—the heathen hordes. The English invaders, who at the supposed time of these incidents were still heathen. See p. 112.

11, 5.—broader and higher, etc. The metrical change is significant of a touch of emotion in the speaker.

11, 6.—twelve...Arthur's wars. According to Nennius (*Dict. Nat. Biography*, "Arthur") the twelve victories of Arthur were: (1) At the mouth of the river Glein; (2, 3, 4, 5) On a river called by the Britons Dugblas [Duglas] in the region of Linnuis (Geoffrey makes this Lincolnshire); (6) On the river Bassas (for Lusas); (7) In the wood Celidon; (8) At Guinnion Castle; (9) At the city of Leogis, which is called Kairleon (Caerleon on the Usk, says Geoffrey, but 'Caerleon' is simply 'Camp of the Legion'); (10) At the river Tribruit (Treuroit); (11) At the mountain Agnet, called cat Bregoin (wood of Bregoin), which a marginal gloss says was in Somersetshire; (12) At the hill of Badon. This last is historical; the hill is identified with Baydon Hill, between Silchester and Chichester.

Tennyson give a poetical account of these battles in *Lancelot*

and Elaine. At the request of Lavaine to be told of Arthur's glorious wars,

‘Lancelot spoke
And answer'd him at full, as having been
With Arthur in the fight which all day long
Rang by the white mouth of the violent Glem ;
And in the four loud battles by the shore
Of Duglas ; that on Bassa ; then the war
That thunder'd in and out the gloomy skirts
Of Celidon the forest ; and again
By castle Gurnion, where the glorious King
Had on his cuirass worn our Lady's Head.
Carved of one emerald center'd in a sun
Of silver rays, that lighten'd as he breathed ;
And at Caerleon had he help'd his lord,
When the strong neighings of the wild white Horse
Set every gilded parapet shuddering ;
And up in Agned-Cathregonion too,
And down the waste sand-shores of Trath Treroit,
Where many a heathen fell ; ‘and on the mount
Of Badon I myself beheld the King
Charge at the head of all his Table Round,
And all his legions crying Christ and him,
And break them ; and I saw him, after, stand
High on a heap of slain, from spur to plume
Red as the rising sun with human blood,
And seeing me, with a great voice he cried,
“ They are broken, they are broken ! ” for the King.
However mild he seems at home, nor cares
For triumph in our mimic wars, the jousts, ...
Yet in this heathen war the fire of God
Fills him : I never saw his like : there lives
No greater leader.’

11, 6.—**blazon** (blā'zn).—The word generally means to describe, depict, or paint armorial bearings, as on a shield (O. Fr. *blason*, shield) ; but is used here in a more extended sense of of painting or depicting in gorgeous colours.

11, 7.—**board**. The table at which the knights ate,—the Round Table.

11, 10.—**wealthy**. ‘Abounding in.’

11, 10.—**mere**. A.S. *mere*, sea, lake ; hence Mid. E. and Mod. E. *mere*, lake. (Cf. *mer*-maid.)

11, 11.—Arthur finds the brand **Excalibur**. ‘Brand’ (cf. *burn*) means ‘a piece of blazing wood,’ but is used as a vivid epithet of a flashing sword. Excalibur (Malory. i. 7.) was so bright in the enemies’ eyes, it gave light like thirty torches. It was always customary among the Teutons and Celts to give names to their choicest weapons. The name Excalibur is of Celtic origin, meaning “cut steel.” How Arthur obtained the sword is narrated in *The Coming of Arthur*.

‘The sword
That rose from out the bosom of the lake,
And Arthur rowed across and took it—rich
With jewels, elfin Urim, on the hilt.
Bewildering heart and eye—the blade so bright
That men are blinded by it—on one side,
Graven in the oldest tongue of all this world,
“Take me,” but turn the blade and ye shall see,
And written in the speech ye speak yourself,
“Cast me away!”’

Compare *Morte d’Arthur*, p. 83. His giving up the sword is told in the latter poem, p. 84 ff.

‘Finds (pres. tense) the brand,’ because the picture represents Arthur in the act of taking the sword; but possibly suggesting the spiritual strength Arthur constantly receives from the religion of Christ.

11, 12.—**One to the west...blank**. In heraldry ‘blank’ was the opposite of ‘blazoned.’ The shields in Arthur’s hall were

‘Some blazon’d, some but earven. and some blank.’

—Gareth and Lynette.

11, 12.—**counter**. ‘Opposite.’ (Fr. *contre*, L. *contra*, against, prep.)

The Source of the Description of Arthur’s Hall.—“Several points in the description of Arthur’s hall suggest the idea that the chapel of King’s College, Cambridge, may have been in the poet’s mind. The twelve great stained glass windows through which streams the light that falls upon the board, answer to the twelve windows along the south side of the

chapel, through which the sun shines, and the other two windows to the east and to the west, the one blazoned and the other blank, have also their counterpart in the chapel (or had till a few years since). The epithet 'long-vaulted,' used of the hall in *Gareth and Lynette*, is very appropriate to the chapel."—Macaulay, p. 48.

The Symbolism of the Hall.—The zones plainly indicate the progress of civilization:—The barbarous age in which wild beasts are superior to the savage; the semi-barbarous in which men subsist on the products of the chase, having the beasts in subjection to them; the civilized, in which men are perfect in so-called strength, knightly warriors with the trained resources and courtly graces of chivalry; the age of moral force when men begin ('with growing wings') to have a touch of the spirit of God; rising into the highest ideal of mankind—man perfect in form and strength ('made by Merlin'), the roof and crown of all things ('with a crown') endued with supreme spiritual force ('peak'd wings') that is ever directed towards the unchangeable and eternal Verities, God ('pointed to the Northern Star'). It is from the east that man thus perfect derives this spiritual strength that illumines him in art, literature, and religion, and this strength is partly reflected below to the toiling and oppressed people.

The Hall within symbolizes Arthur's life, from the time he begins his rule ('eastern') endued with the sword of the Spirit ('Excalibur') till, though not yet come ('west...blank'), his end.

"This hall, built by Merlin for Arthur, is the structure which the ideal soul builds for itself by the exercise of its powers of imagination and intellect. The other parts of the city, the roofs, the towers, the spires, we may understand as the minor accessories and adjuncts of its life. But this is the inner shrine of personality wherein the soul itself sits... The external aspect of the hall represents the dominion of the soul in its external and visible effect upon the progress of the human race. Next we have its internal aspect:—The hall

is broader and higher than any in all the lands, as denoting that the subjection of the lower side of man's nature to the higher brings true liberty and freedom to his life. All the light inside streams through the twelve great battles of the King, showing that the inner light of the soul's life is derived from conflict; continual warfare is its essential condition. The warfare is depicted, from the first taking of the spiritual sword in baptism—the commencement of the spiritual life—to the laying down of the sword, which will be when all warfare is over.

“The King's horror lest the hall should vanish like a dream seems to mark the spiritual and immaterial character of the whole.”—Elsdale, p. 64 ff.

“Arthur, alone represented with wings full grown, is the climax of the spiritual evolution, and his wings point to the steadfast pole star, as though he were a denizen of the regions of eternity beyond the reach of change, newly alighted in a mission to the struggling children of earth. And indeed a fresh type of the ideal, dawning on the minds of men, comes with all the authority of a divine message.”—Maccallum, p. 347.

11, 18.—**dreamlike.** Vanish ‘like the glorious fabrics of our dreams.’

11, 19.—**unremorseful.** ‘Pitiless.’ ‘Remorse’ has here a meaning, once common, of ‘pity,’ as in Shakspeare:

“Thou’lt show thy mercy and remorse more strange
Than is thy strange apparent cruelty.”

—*Merchant of Venice*, iv., i., 20.

11, 20.—**And in he rode.** The ancient halls were so built that a knight might enter on horseback. The old romances often depicted the entrance of a mounted knight while the lord of the hall was at dinner. So in Chaucer's Tale of Cambuscan:

“While that this king sit thus in his nobley...
In at the halle dore al sodenly
Then came a knight upon a stede of brass.”

11, 21.—**The golden dragon.** At the time of Aurelius's

death, according to Geoffrey (xiv.), there appeared in the sky a star, at the end of which was a globe of fire in form of a dragon, symbolizing the sovereignty of Uther. Uther then had two dragons made, one of which was borne with him in his wars ; hence his name Pendragon (Dragonhead). To the Celts the dragon therefore meant sovereignty, and as such was used by Arthur as Victoria uses the crown. The symbol is here probably on Arthur's helmet, as we see from *Guinevere* :

‘And while he spoke to these his helm was lower’d,
To which for crest the golden dragon clung
Of Britain’ ;

though I am not certain it is not his banner, as in the same poem :

‘Wet with the mist, and smitten by the lights,
The Dragon of the great Pendragonship.’

11, 22.—**who burnt the hold.** Cf. 9, 15 and 9, 22.

11, 23.—**sear’d.** ‘Scarred,’ especially from burns.

12, 1.—**in among bright faces...prest.** A splendid scene for the artist. Here is Tennyson as painter with quick eye for the picturesque contrast of the grimy warriors and religious enthusiasts—yet true to his theory of life that good must be done—must be fought for, not merely longed for (cf. 37, 1 ff.).

12, 3.—**being nearest.** Percivale's modesty is unconsciously revealed in words like these. Cf. 13, 20.

12, 5.—**protesting.** ‘Making solemn affirmation’ to undertake the quest. Cf. Gen. 43. 3.

12, 7.—**his face, Darkened.** Notice the effect of the initial position and the pause, and the repetition in l. 10. “These lines (7-11) represent a moment of the highest spiritual agony ; but the pathetic intensity is somewhat weakened by the dialogue that follows.”—Littledale, p. 226.

The thought in the king's mind is the same that made him say of Edyrn, who from evil deeds became all clean :—

‘This work of Edyrn wrought upon himself
After a life of violence, seems to me
A thousand-fold more great and wonderful

Than if some knight of mine, risking his life...
Should make an onset single on a realm
Of robbers.'

—*Geraint and Enid*.

12, 10.—**Woe is me.** 'Woe' may be regarded as a noun subject; 'me' is the indirect object.

12, 13.—**yea, yea.** A touch of irony.

12, 14.—**and hast not.** A paratactic construction = 'even though thou hast not.'

12, 15.—**Nay.** To oppose Arthur's suggestion that he has no reason for being bold. 'I had every evidence except the sight.'

12, 22.—**What go ye,** etc. An echo of Matt. 11. 7, when Christ speaks to the multitudes concerning John the Baptist. The king is ironical and wishes to show that they had, according to their statements, only a luminous cloud, small reason to forsake their duties as sworn knights of the Round Table.

13, 2.—**Shrilling.** 'Crying shrilly.' A Tennysonian verb, frequently used, cf.,

'Flared on her face, she shrilling, let me die.'

—*Lancelot and Elaine*.

13, 3.—**Sir Arthur.** In view of 7, 18 we see that "Galahad has in a manner loosed himself from the Order of the Table, and addresses its head merely as 'Sir Arthur,' no longer his lord, but his fellow,"—Maccallum, p. 38.

13, 5.—**And O Galahad.** The 'and' is perhaps used as a novel means of emphasis.

13, 10.—**A sign to maim this Order.** To 'maim' by the loss of its members through the quest. This view of Arthur's must be kept in mind. The whole question of his position will become clearer later.

13, 11.—**the leader's bell.** The leading sheep in a flock, the bell-wether, bears a bell, which sheep-like the others will thoughtlessly follow.

13, 13.—**Taliessin** (*tāl' ie sin*). Talies(s)in, 'Radiant Brow,' was the chief of the Welsh bards contemporary with Arthur. He was the son of Saint Henwg of Caeleion upon Usk and

lived with the lords Urien Rheged and Gwyddno, and with Arthur, at whose court his poetic art and skill in science won him great renown. Poems of his are preserved which "certainly contain passages of exquisite beauty." (See Lady Guest's *Mabinogion*, "Taliesin," p. 471 ff.)

The phrase 'our fullest throat of song,' = 'our greatest singer of noble lays,' echoes the phrase of Keats,

'Singest of summer in full-throated ease.'

—*Ode to a Nightingale*, 10.

13, 14.—**One hath sung . . . will sing.** 'Will' = 'are resolved.' The King's argument that though some one may be called to follow the Grail, his knights must not therefore think that they, too, are all qualified to follow it. They might as well think they equalled Taliessin in song, or Lancelot in chivalry, when they are but strong men whose duty is to do tasks within the measure of their capacities.

13, 17.—**Unproven.** 'Whose valour has not yet stood the test of trial.' The form 'proven,' which should not properly have the strong participial ending, being a weak verb, is used with authority only in Scotch legal phraseology.

13, 18.—**overborne by one.** One is emphatic, 'by but one knight.'

13, 23.—**sudden heads of violence.** 'Unexpected rebellions of violent men.' The phrase here has not, I think, anything to do with the expression 'to make head,' meaning 'to make opposition'; but rather with 'gather head' as in

'Faction seldom gathers head.'

—*You Ask Me Why*.

The whole passage suggests the figure of serpents raising their heads to strike, which must be beaten flat.

14, 1.—**The strong White Horse.** The emblem, it is said, I know not on what authority, of the Saxons, and certainly so used by Tennyson. It is still to be seen in the arms of Hanover. It was probably the emblem on the banner of the English leaders, Hengist and Horsa (A. S. *hengest*, steed,

hors, horse) ; and therefore significant of the English power.
So Modred plotting with the Saxons,

‘Tampered with the Lords of the White Horse,
Heathen, the brood by Hengist left.’

—*Guinevere*, 16.

‘leagues

With Lords of the White Horse, heathen, and knights,
Traitors.’

id., 569.

The victory of Alfred over the Danes at Ash-down is still commemorated by the white horse carved on the chalk cliff near the battle-ground. See *Geraint and Enid*,

‘Men weed the white horse on the Berkshire hills,’ etc.

The imagery in ‘splash’d . . . the strong White Horse’ recalls (Littledale) Shelley’s lines :

“Last came Anarchy,—he rode
On a white horse splash’d with blood.”

—*The Masque of Anarchy*, viii.

14, 3.—**since your vows are sacred.** So Arthur before said, when he and Lancelot had fought their first battle and

‘Sware on the field of death a deathless love.

And Arthur said, “Man’s word is God in man :

Let chance what will, I trust thee to the death.”’

—*Coming of Arthur*.

Repeated by Arthur in *Balin and Balan* :

‘Man’s word is God in man.’

14, 4.—**For ye know.** Note this archaic sense—frequent in Tennyson—of ‘for’ = ‘since.’

14, 8.—**unchallenged.** ‘Without anyone claiming the opportunity.’ The sense of ‘challenge’ = ‘claim’ is rare to-day. It was more frequent in older English, as in Robert Gloucester (1300).

‘Challenge I will that land through right’ (modernized spelling).

—*Chronicle*, 4223.

(The L. *calumniare*, from *calumniari*, meant to accuse falsely, but came in its early English form to mean not only ‘accuse,’ ‘reprove,’ but also ‘assert,’ ‘lay claim to,’ ‘claim.’)

14, 8.—**wandering fires.** The flame of the *ignis fatuus* or marsh fire, playing over swamps. Arthur here does not refer to the Grail, which, in the case of Galahad, he admits is a true light to a chosen spirit, but to the false objects which the benighted and superstitious minds of his knights will mistake with fatal result for the true guiding light.

14, 9.—**quagmire.** A marsh that trembles under foot. (= *quake-mire*.)

14, 12.—**The morrow morn.** Elsewhere used, as in

‘They two will wed the morrow morn.’

—*Lady Clare*, 7.

14, 12.—**full field of gracious pasture.** ‘The tournament.’ Note the picturesque Tennysonian periphrasis. In Malory: ‘Never shall I see you again whole together, therefore I will see you whole together in the meadow of Camelot, to just and to tourney,’ etc. (xiii. 6).

14, 17.—**sun broke from under ground.** A metaphor, as originally in ‘day-break.’ Cf. l. 1 of p. 15, and

‘But when the next day broke from underground.’

—*Lancelot and Elaine*.

14, 18.—**closed.** That is, in the combat of the jousts.

14, 22.—**I myself and Galahad... overthrew.** In Malory (xiii. 6): “Then Sir Galahad dressed him in the midst of the meadow, and began to break spears marvellously, that all men had wonder of him, for he there surmounted all other knights... save twain, that was Sir Launcelot and Sir Percivale” (xii. 6). In Malory the tournament takes place before the vision of the Grail in the hall, when only news of its coming was sent by Nacien the hermit.

14, 25.—**burst the barriers.** The lists surrounding the jousting-field, restraining the spectators from interfering with the sport.

THE DEPARTURE IN QUEST OF THE GRAIL.

15, 1.—**brake from under ground—** The sudden flash of memory of that glorious scene of the departure of the knights

here breaks in upon Percivale and stops the regular progress of his story.

15, 3.—**Built by old kings.** The Allegory here is: "The mystical city of Camelot; the home that in successive generations the mind of man has reared for its expanding needs;... the edifices of every type and age, the storied piles of former kings, what are these but the slow acquisitions of the unresting spirit of man."—Macallum, p. 325f.

15, 5.—**rich and dim.** These are the epithets of Camelot in *Lancelot and Elaine*: 'still rich city,' 'dim rich city.'

15, 5.—**roofs totter'd.** The houses, built after an old fashion, had the upper stories projecting over the lower so that the roofs leaning far out over the street seemed about to fall.

15, 7.—**Met foreheads... of those.** The street is so narrow and the upper stories project over the street to such an extent that the spectators on opposite sides come face to face.

15, 10.—**dragons clinging.** The supports of the balconies upon the walls are carved into the form of dragons—fabulous, winged, lizard-like monsters.

15, 10.—**crazy.** 'Dilapidated.' The word shows a trace of its etymological meaning. (Middle Eng. *crasen*, to break, break to pieces, crack.)

15, 13.—**wyvern** (*wi' vern*). A fabulous monster shaped something like a dragon. It is represented with wings and with its two legs armed with claws; its hinder parts are in the form of a serpent with a forked tail. (Fr. *wivre*, from Lat. *vipera*, a viper.) The buildings are ornamented with stones carved into fantastic shapes of wyverns, lions, etc.

15, 13.—**griffin.** A fabulous monster combining the head, breast, and wings of an eagle with the body and hind parts of a lion. (Gk. *gruph*, a griffin, from its hooked (*grupos*) beak.)

15, 15.—**speed.** 'Prosper.' (A.S. *spēdan*, succeed, prosper, hasten.) The verb is here optative in form, 'May God prosper you.'

15, 18.—**All in middle street.** 'Right in the middle of the

(open) street.' An archaic construction, once common in English. It occurs frequently in Tennyson :—

'The living airs of middle night.'

—*Arabian Nights*, 41, 3.

'And fling him far into the middle mere.'

—*Morte d'Arthur*, 83, 19.

The construction in Tennyson has been called, and no doubt rightly, a classicism, on the basis of similar expressions in Latin and Greek ; as, *in medio mari*, in the mid sea=in the middle of the sea ; but expressions such as *middel wei*, mid-way ; *middel niht*, midnight, are common in Middle English, and *be midelen strēame*, in mid stream, is in Anglo-Saxon.

15, 20.—**This madness.** Notice the queen's view of the Quest,—hardly for Arthur's reasons, however.

15, 21.—**Gate of the Three Queens...**render'd mystically. This read in the original edition :

'And then we reach'd the weirdly-sculptured gate,
Where Arthur's wars were render'd mystically' ;

which repeats the epithet in *Lancelot and Elaine* :

'And past beneath the weirdly-sculptured gates
Far up the dim rich city to her kin.'

The Gate is described :

'There was no gate like it under heaven.
For barefoot on the keystone, which was lined
And rippled like an ever-fleeting wave,
The Lady of the Lake stood : all her dress
Wept from her sides as water flowing away ;
But like the cross her great and goodly arms
Stretch'd under all the cornice and upheld :
And drops of water fell from either hand ;
And down from one a sword was hung, from one
A censer, either worn with wind and storm ;
And o'er her breast floated the sacred fish ;
And in the space to left of her, and right,
Were Arthur's wars in weird devices done,
New things and old co-twisted, as if Time
Were nothing, so inveterately, that men
Were giddy gazing there ; and over all
High on the top were those three Queens, the friends
Of Arthur, who should help him at his need.

—*Gareth and Lynette*.

In this description the Lady of the Lake symbolizes Religion; her waving dress, its changing forms; the sacred fish is emblematic of Christ; the sword typifies divine justice; the incense, holiness, etc. The Lady of the Lake was present at the Coronation of Arthur. It was she who gave him Excalibur. Her dwelling was

‘Down in a deep; calm, whatsoever storms
May shake the world, and when the surface rolls,
Hath power to walk the waters like our Lord.’

—*The Coming of Arthur.*

The “Three Queens,” too, first meet us at the Coronation, when

‘thro’ the cross
And those around it and the Crucified
Down from the casement over Arthur, smote
Flame-colour, vert and azure, in three rays,
One falling upon each of three fair queens,
Who stood in silence near his throne, the friends
Of Arthur, gazing on him, tall, with bright
Sweet faces, who will help him at his need.’

The light falling here through the stained window, blazoned with a picture of the crucifixion, and dividing into three rays, shows the three Christian virtues (1 Cor. 13. 13), Faith, Hope, and Charity, each typified by one of the fair queens. But Malory has nothing of their presence at the Coronation. He mentions only the three queens who received Arthur into the barge at his Passing. (See *Morte d'Arthur*, p. 90.)

15, 22.—render’d. ‘Represented.’

15, 23.—And thence departed. The scene of the departure is in Malory, but told more simply. “Then found they by tale an hundred and fifty, and all were knights of the Round Table. And then they...recommanded them all wholly unto the queen, and there was weeping and great sorrow. Then the queen departed into her chamber so that no man should perceive her great sorrows...Sir Launcelot...went...and she cried, O, Sir Launcelot, ye have betrayed me and put me to death...but He that suffered death...be to your good conduct....So they mounted upon their horses, and rode through the

streets of Camelot, and there was weeping of the rich and poor, and the king turned away, and might not speak for weeping" (xiii. 8).

15, 25.—**lists.** The barriers enclosing a field for jousting; also, as here, figuratively for the field itself. (O. Fr. *lis*se. barrier, probably from the Lat. *licium*, thread.)

SIR PERCIVALE'S QUEST.

16, 1.—**names.** This figure the poet uses elsewhere:

‘As if the quiet bones were blest
Among familiar names to rest
And in the places of his youth.’

—*In Memoriam*, xviii.

16, 2.—**heaven so blue.** Tennyson's view of nature as a subject of art should be noticed. "He rarely makes it the subject of his poetry. Everywhere his poetry is about man. Yet everywhere nature enters largely into his poetry. It enters, too, in a close and peculiar connection with the human characters which form the subjects of his poetry. He does not draw the man, and then draw the nature around him; but he enters into the man, and sees nature through his eyes, nature, at the same time, so adapting herself to the mood of the man, that her spirit and his seem one. This relation I have expressed by the name *sensuo-sympathetic*. There is nothing like it in the poetry of Wordsworth, or of Shelley, or of Keats. In each of these, nature, after one manner or another, masters the man. In Keats she subdues him; in Shelley she transfigures him; in Wordsworth she is his teacher. But in Tennyson she is one with him. As she presents herself to his senses, she is in absolute sympathy with him. His pain and fear, his hopes and questionings are hers. All through *In Memoriam* one feels this. In such poems as *Mariana* and the *Lotos-Eaters* the spirit of the picture would remain the same, though the human beings were struck out."—Tainsh, p. 11.

16, 5.—**dark.** 'Ominous of evil.'

16, 7.—**a driving gloom.** 'Drive' is here intransitive,

‘moving on under the impulse of the storm’; cf. 33, 9; 60, 6.
 ‘Gloom’ is used figuratively for ‘clouds.’

16, 8.—**every evil word**, etc. Cf. 10, 18ff.; 20, 7ff, etc., for other instances of the anaphora. Here it shows the monotonous iterations of the spirit that doubts. Similarly the successive disappointments are emphasized by the monotonous knell, ‘Fell into dust’ 17, 1; 17, 9; 18, 6.

16, 14.—**thirsty unto death**. Cf. Philip. 2. 27. The image of the soul thirsting is a beautiful illustration of Ps. 42. 1.

The Allegory. Percivale’s proud elation of heart (15, 24 ff.) is too great to last; the natural reaction of doubt and despondency follows, in which the soul is unsatisfied. Remorse of conscience, the thought of evil done, clogs the progress of the spirit that seeks to advance spiritually. “Percivale’s first lesson is—the fatal and clinging power of evil in the past, as paralyzing effort and leading to gloom and despondency for the future.”—Elsdale, p. 66. “Pride in one’s self, and its extreme opposite—despair of sin, which throws us back on self—alike render the life of exalted holiness impossible.”—Stopford Brooke, p. 333.

16, 17.—**deep lawns**. ‘Lawns upon which the grass is deep.’

16, 18.—**sharp**. ‘With a sudden well-defined fall.’

16, 18.—**crisping white**. The Lat. *crispus* means ‘curled,’ ‘crimped,’ ‘wavy,’ ‘uneven’; hence in English ‘crisp,’ ‘crisped,’ ‘crisping,’ denote, applied to water, ‘curled into minute waves or ripples.’

“You Nymphs,...leave your crisp channels.”

—Shakspeare, *Tempest*, iv. i.

“How from that sapphire fount the crisped brooks,...
 Ran nectar.”

—Milton, *Paradise Lost*, iv.

“The babbling runnel crispeth.”

—Tennyson, *Claribel*.

“The crisp white crest of the running waves.”

—Black. *Green Past*. xxix.

“Crisp foam-flakes seud along the level sand.”

—Tennyson, *A Dream of Fair Women*.

‘To watch the crisping ripples on the beach.’

—Tennyson, *Lotos-Eaters*, 61. 1.

This touch of description here shows the subtle eye of the poet for the phenomena of nature, commented on elsewhere. The water of the rapid forces the level waters at its foot into a wave the white crest of which is continually falling back on the running water above. It affords likewise an admirable illustration of the use Tennyson makes of Malory. In the latter there is only this hint of all Percivale’s quest. “He (Launcelot) came to the fairest well that ever he saw, and Sir Launcelot alight, and would have drunk of that well. And when he stooped to drink of the water, the water sank from him” (xvi. 2).

16, 20.—**took.** ‘Charmed,’ ‘captivated.’ So in *The Day-Dream*, 79, 8.

‘So much your eyes my fancy take.’

16, 25.—**apples . . . Fell into dust.** A suggestion from the apples of Sodom, or Dead Sea apples, which outwardly are lovely but when struck or pressed explode, and you have but the rind and a few fibres, the rest was air.

The Allegory. The first illusion of Percivale is that the pleasures of sense—the beauty of nature, the delights of the eye and ear, or of the palate—can satisfy the thirst of the spiritual nature for a union with God.

17, 7.—**As who should say.** ‘Which was a way of saying.’ The phrase is archaic. Shakspeare used it in :

‘Here are a sort of men whose visages
Do cream and mantle like a standing pond,
And do a wilful stillness entertain, . . .
As who should say ‘I am Sir Oracle.’

—*Merchant of Venice*, I. i. 88 ff.

Also similarly in *Rich. II.*, v. iv. 8. The force of ‘who’ is indefinite; and the phrase has usually been explained, ‘As if one should say’ (Clark-Wright, etc.). But the real force is to indicate that ‘it was *a way of saying*,’ as intelligible as if

he, she or any one had said in words. . . . The idea 'it was a way of saying' comes out very strongly in current French, from which language we get the phrase, where, for example, *C'était comme qui dirait un chapeau* means, 'It was a sort of hat.'

The Allegory. Percivale's second lesson was that there is no abiding satisfaction for the soul in the sweetness of home and married love,—death may destroy wife and home—and even the memory of the beloved dead is fruitless of spiritual peace.

17, 21.—**was I ware.** An archaic use of 'ware,' which in modern usage is restricted to the compound 'beware.' In Malory it was used with any part of the verb to be: "He was ware of a house," xiv. 3, etc.

17, 23.—**casque.** A 'helmet,' but the word is restricted in use to poetry and history.

17, 24.—**on me.** 'Towards me.'

18, 6.—**Fell into dust.** *The Allegory.* The vision of wealth tempts Percivale. He sees it like the rising sun—its first gleams are worshipped by the morning labourers of the world, and it seems to bring a new morning to him. Then wealth in the noon-tide glory of a power that anybody submits to comes within his reach. but at the very moment the eternal discontent seizes him, and he finds in it no rest for his spiritual thirst.

This Stopford Brooke interprets differently: "It is the symbol of the soul seeking to be satisfied with the glory of earth, chiefly to be attained in war," p. 334.

18, 7.—**wearying.** A poetic use in this intransitive sense. 'growing weary.'

18, 10.—**Prick'd.** 'Pointed upward,' an intransitive use of the verb, as in *Gareth and Lynette*, quoted in note 10, 11.

18, 10.—**incredible pinnacles.** 'Incredibly high.' Cf. *The Voyage of Maeldune*, where

'The pine shot aloft...to an unbelievable height.'

18, 14.—**clomb** (*clōm*). A favourite archaism with Tennyson. Cf.

‘As they clomb
Heavenward.’

—*Arabian Nights*, 39, 23.

‘Up-clomb the shadowy pine above the woven copse.’

—*The Lotos-Eaters*, 57, 2.

But we find **as** well the prose form—‘**climb’d**.’

‘They climb’d as quickly.’

—*The Voyage*, 105, 11.

The verb is strong in Anglo-Saxon, usually strong in Middle English, but weak in Modern English.

18, 16.—**ruinous city**. To-day ‘ruinous’ has generally the active sense, destructive; here the older sense occurs, ‘fallen in ruins.’ So in Shakspeare:

“Lest, growing ruinous, the building fall.”

—*Two Gentlemen of Verona*, v., iv, 9.

18, 26.—**crumble into dust**. *The Allegory*. Percivale next experiences the little worth of popular fame and influence among one’s contemporaries, and its duration so brief that even the name of the mightiest and purest of men is forgotten in the course of a few generations (cf. ‘one man of an exceeding age’). Thus pleasure, domestic love, wealth, and fame, have in turn failed to satisfy the soul’s thirst. After so much disillusionment, despair of all—even of the most sacred—comes. Yet here perhaps is the ‘losing himself,’ by which alone Percivale can at last ‘save himself.’

19, 1.—**dropt**. Presenting in a word the picture of the precipitous descent from the mountain to the valley, and symbolizing the change in the spirit of Percivale as he leaves his quest to seek the monastery.

SIR GALAHAD’S QUEST.

19, 6.—**humility**, **The highest virtue**. Cf. *The Princess*, vii. 214.

‘She knew it, she had fail’d
In sweet humility; had fail’d in all.’

19, 9.—**Naked of glory**, etc. Philip. 2. 5-7.

19, 9.—**His mortal change.** His becoming a mortal man, “taking on our mortality.”

19, 10.—**she.** Humility, mother of all virtues.

19, 13.—**like.** ‘In the form of.’

19, 14.—**the gray-hair’d wisdom.** See Matt. 2. 7 ff. Elsewhere the thought is expressed :

‘Such times have been not since the light that led
The holy Elders with the gift of myrrh.’

—*Morte d’Arthur*, 91, 14 f.

19, 22.—**slaked my burning thirst.** It is a spiritual thirst satisfied by spiritual communion with Christ in the celebration of the Eucharist. See John 4. 13. Rev. 21. 6.

19, 23.—**sacring of the mass.** ‘Consecration of the mass.’ The ceremony in which the sacramental bread and wine are thought to become the body and blood of Christ. The word is archaic, from O.Fr. *sacre*, consecration, connected with the Lat. *sacer*, sacred.

The basis of this and the following lines is the description of Galahad seeing the Grail at the castle of Carbonek (Malory, xvii. 20). “Then the bishop made semblant as though he would have gone to the sacring of the mass. And then he took an ubbly (sacramental bread), which was made in likeness of bread; and at the lifting up there came a figure in likeness of a child, and the visage was as red and as bright as any fire, and smote himself into the bread, so that they all saw it, that the bread was formed of a fleshly man.” But Tennyson keeps clear of the succeeding miracle of Christ’s appearance to Galahad from the Holy Vessel.

19, 24.—**holy elements.** The bread and wine used in the Eucharist.

20, 8.—**sliding.** A favourite word of the poet’s,—‘moving,’ as in :

‘As down dark tides the glory slides.

—*Sir Galahad*.

‘Thy sliding keel, till Phosphor, bright.’

—*In Memoriam*, ix.

‘Slide the heavy barges trailed.’

—*Lady of Shalott*, 49, 2.

A similar liking he had for 'slip,' as in *The Brook*, 101, 24,

'I slip, I slide, I gloom, I glance.'

"The too frequent use of the word 'to slip' is one of the few verbal blemishes in Mr. Tennyson's writing."—*Quarterly Review*, 1870.

20, 8.—**blacken'd.** Covered with the blackness of night.

20, 14.—**clash'd.** The clash of arms in battle. A word liked by Tennyson for its picturesque value. Cf.

'closed

And clashed in such a tourney,' 14, 18f.

'Clash'd with his fiery few and won.'

—*Ode on the Death of the Duke of Wellington.*

20, 16.—**hard at hand.** 'Close,' 'near.' Cf.

'Till hard upon the cry of 'breakers' came
The crash of ruin.'

—*Enoch Arden.*

20, 18.—**Far in the spiritual city.** See 7, 19 and note.

20, 18.—**And come thou.** The polysyndeton is intended to give a colloquial narrative effect to Percivale's story, but is overdone. In the sixty-three lines from 18, 8 to 20, 17, 'and' occurs forty-eight times.

20, 20f.—**his eye . . . drew me.** See 7, 20ff.

21, 2f.—**glanced . . . gloom'd.** 'Gleamed and darkened.' For 'to gloom,' as 'to be darkly visible,' cf. 'gloom-ing.' Tennyson was fond of the word, and used it frequently.

'Gloom'd the low coast and quivering brine.'

—*The Voyage*, 106, 7.

'I slip, I slide, I gloom, I glance.'

—*The Brook*, 101, 24.

21, 4f.—**The lightnings . . . fire.** "Whoever has seen, while involved in it, a fierce thunderstorm on a mountain-top, and the pine-forests smitten by the quick-gleaming bolt, will know with what extraordinary truth and force Tennyson has made it."—Stopford Brooke, p. 327.

21, 9f.—**A great black swamp . . . bones of men.** So in Bunyan's description of the Valley of the Shadow of Death, it is

“as dark as pitch...(and) at the end of this valley lay blood, bones, ashes, and mangled bodies of men, even of Pilgrims, who had gone that way formerly.”

21, 12.—**link'd with many a bridge.** ‘Bridge’ is here used as the ‘span’ joining the piers.

21, 13.—**A thousand piers ran.** This recall the allegory of the *Vision of Mirza*, “Spectator,” 159: “I see a bridge... standing in the midst of the tide. The bridge thou seest, said he, is human life, consider it attentively. Upon a more leisurely survey of it, I found that it consisted of three score and ten entire arches, with several broken arches,” etc.

21, 17.—**thrice above him...opened.** Notice that it is in these successive flashes of lightning that Percivale sees the changes in Galahad; first when he is on the Great Sea, ‘starry clear’; then in the heavens ‘like a silver star,’ but winged, and with the Grail above; then when he has disappeared, and the Grail gleaming, ‘the least of little stars,’ over the Celestial City shows that he has reached the ‘goal of all the saints.’

Macaulay, I think wrongly, identifies ‘the least of little stars’ with Galahad’s third appearance: “Galahad and his boat...now seemed like a very small star in the distance,” p. 60.

21, 18.—**blazed with thunder.** With lightning, which lighted up the rifts in the clouds. ‘Blaze,’ as applied to sound as of a trumpet, is the same word as ‘blare,’ and possibly this meaning is also suggested by the text.

21, 19.—**Shoutings of all the sons of God.** Cf. Job 38. 7: (Where wast thou) when the morning stars sang together and all the sons of God shouted for joy.

21, 22.—**Holy Vessel.** In the original edition, these words were printed without capital letters; so in 22, 3.

21, 23.—**in white samite.** The word samite is a favourite one in all the Arthurian romances, which betray the Middle Age liking for gorgeous dress. It is a rich silk-stuff, of various colours. Red, it served as robe for the king at his coronation (*Coming of Arthur*); white, as the dress of the

Lady of the Lake (*id.*); black, as the pall of Elaine's funeral barge (*Lancelot and Elaine*). (Fr. *samit*, from L. *examitum*, from Gk. *ex*, six, *mitos*, thread.)

21, 27.—**I saw him like a silver star.** There are many suggestions of Shelley in this picture of Galahad's translation. Cf.

'The breath whose might I have invoked in song
Descends on me; my spirit's bark is driven
Far from the shore, far from the trembling throng
Whose sails were never to the tempest given;
The massy earth and sphered skies are riven;
I am borne darkly, fearfully, afar;
Whilst burning through the inmost veil of Heaven,
The soul of Adonais like a star,
Beacons from the abode where the Eternal are.'

—*Adonais*, lv.

Galahad's boat appears also in the poem *Galahad*. (See the Appendix.)

22, 4f.—**Redder than any rose . . . withdrawn.** Percivale had his sister's account (5, 25) and Galahad's (20, 8ff.) to warrant him.

22, 8.—**down on the waste.** Hanging low over the waste of waters of the sea.

22, 10.—**In a glory.** Illuminated as with a halo.

22, 10.—**like one pearl.** The imagery here recalls the description of the New Jerusalem in Revel. 21. 10ff.

22, 12.—**strike from the sea.** 'Mount up,' like a flash of sunlight at dawn. Cf.

'The sunbeam strikes along the world.'

—*In Memoriam*, xv.

20, 15.—**never eyes again shall see.** The account of Galahad's translation in Malory is here of great interest: "And therewith he kneeled down tofore the table and made his prayers, and then suddenly his soul departed to Jesu Christ, and a great multitude of angels bare his soul up to heaven, that the two fellows (Percivale and Bors) might well behold it. Also the two fellows saw come from heaven a hand but they saw not the body; and then it came right to the

vessel and took it and the spear and so bare it up to heaven. Sithen (since) was there never man so hardy to say that he had seen the Sancgreal" (xvii. 22).

22, 16f.—**Then fell the floods of heaven**, etc. The lines here are wonderfully effective: they express the natural result of the phenomena described in 21, 4ff.; they afford a wonderful contrast in the darkness that comes with the rain to the glory of the heavenly city; and furnish—a most difficult matter—a satisfactory transition from the high-wrought vision of the spiritual city to the realities of common-place life into which Percival enters.

22, 17.—**the deathful ridge**. This is the 'hill,' 20, 25ff.

22, 22.—**the gate of Arthur's wars**. See 15, 21f.

The Allegory.—The hill that 'none but man could climb' suggests that the experience to follow is such as comes only in human life. Death is about us through this life, and in the end we come to the swamp of death, which we can cross only in one way, and once across we can never return ('bridge... vanish'd'). This passage leads the saintly spirit, first into the sea from which the soul comes at birth (see *The Coming of Arthur*) and into which it returns at death (cf. *Morte d' Arthur*); whence amid the rejoicing of the angels it passes into the Eternal City. "The hill, . . . with 'storm at the top and death,' is a fitting introduction to a vision of the departure of a soul whose course on earth is run."—Elsdale, p. 67.

Galahad as a Subject of Art.—The image of the stainless knight, wholly apart from sex and appetite, divided from the material interests of the world, a pure spirit clothed for a time in flesh, but the flesh so refined by the spirit that it becomes archangelic matter, a terrible crystal of pure love, moving in the supernatural world, with all its powers round him, while yet on earth—this image, altogether apart from ascetic theology, was one of the finest motives art could have. . . . When Wagner imagined the *Parsifal*, he felt the artist's need of this motive, and he restored this other-world purity to Percivale. Tennyson...preserved this virgin, spotless ideal of Galahad, even

though his view of human life was opposed to the ascetic life connected with it. He could not miss the dazzling ideal of Galahad as an art subject...even adds another image of the same conception in the...sister of Percivale.—Stopford Brooke, p. 324. "This great and lofty vision of the glory of the pure spiritual life, refined and thrilled by heavenly holiness into full union with the world beyond the sense, and needing no death to enter into the perfect life, is done as no one has done this kind of work since Dante."—*ib.*, p. 327.

PERCIVALE'S LAST TRIAL.

23, 1.—all. Adv., 'entirely;' cf. 34, 22.

22, 24.—teem...with miracles. 'Abound in miracles.' (A.S. *tēman*, to bring forth progeny.)

23, 2.—breviary (*brēv'iar e.*) 'A book containing the daily offices or prayers for the canonical hours.'

23, 4.—thorpe. 'Village,' archaic. (A.S. *thorp*, Ger. *dorf*, village.) Cf. *The Brook*, 96, 9, 'thorps.'

23, 5.—plaster'd like a martin's nest. Referring to the village about the monastery walls. Cf. note 7, 3. "The window swallow or house-martin...is a very common British species, glossy black above, white below, and on the rump; the feet covered with short downy white feathers;...the tail long...The nest is built of mud or clay...hemispherical, with the entrance on the side, and is attached to a rock, or very frequently to a wall of a house, under the eaves or in the upper angle of a window." *Chambers's Ency.* Its name of martin is due, like the English 'robin,' to a habit of calling a familiar bird by a familiar name, Martin being such among the French, from whom the name comes.

23, 11.—lyings-in. 'Confinements of women during child-bearing.'

23, 12.—children of the place. In opposition to the preceding noun. They were the "local jokes" not understood out of the thorpe.

23, 14.—**lulling**. Construe with ‘delight,’ understood from l. 10.

23, 15.—**chafferings**. ‘Bargainings.’ Construe, after ‘delight myself with.’ (The derivation is interesting: *cēap* + *faru*, + nom. suffix *-ing*, like ‘market-going.’)

23, 15.—**market-cross**. A cross erected in the market-place. Market-crosses were first built as religious memorials; the structure on which the cross was erected often served as a stand for preaching. Market-crosses still are found in many English towns.

23, 16.—**rejoice**. The colon after ‘away’ necessitates construing ‘rejoice’ with ‘or’: ‘I delight myself with gossip... or, quieting the quarrels of the market-place, I rejoice, being of but little account myself, in this little world about me.’ But the colon is a pity. But for it ‘lulling...market-cross’ might have been an alternative with ‘gossip...sayings,’ the two chief pleasures of the old monk’s life; then, ‘(and) Rejoice...even in their hens and in their eggs,’ which has only a slight connection in thought—as possibly they cause the disputes—with ‘lulling squabbles,’ would have furnished a fine climacteric summary, instead of a mere alternative, of the monk’s view of life. I believe Tennyson intended the latter interpretation.

23, 16.—**small man**. In apposition with ‘I,’ understood.

23, 17.—**in their eggs**—The sentence has grown too long for the mind and breath of the good simple monk, so he drops it.

24, 1.—**eft**. ‘Newt,’ a small lizard, found in cool streams, under stones, or in other damp places.

24, 2.—**changed to wan**. The construction is poetical, growing out of sentences like:

‘Every winter change to spring.’

—*In Memoriam*, liv.

‘Now thy flute-notes are changed to coarse.’

—*The Blackbird*.

24, 6.—**Thither I made.** That is, 'made my way.' Cf.

'But that large-moulded man...

Made at me thro' the press.'

—*The Princess*, v.

24, 9f.—**The Princess**, etc. There is nothing in Malory of the beautiful idyllic picture that the poet here outlines.

24, 11.—**Made my heart leap.** 'Throb with joy.' Cf.

"My heart leaps up when I behold

A rainbow in 'the sky."

—Wordsworth, "*My Heart Leaps Up*."

'And kisses, where the heart on one wild leap.'

—Tennyson, *The Gardener's Daughter*.

25, 4.—**Anon.** 'Presently.' (A.S. *on an*, 'in one' (moment).)

25, 6.—**supplication both of knees and tongue.** The construction is here a zeugma, for according to etymology 'supplication' (from L. *plico*, I bend) may be construed literally with 'knees,' leaving the once figurative construction with 'tongue.'

25, 11.—**O me, my brother!** This voices the anguish that there is even in the memory of the agony of his departure.

25, 16.—**Cared not for her**, etc. *The Allegory*. "In the account of Percivale's meeting with his old love, we have a powerful description of the triumph of the sense of duty and obedience over the human wishes and affections, even where deepest and most legitimate. Note the three stages of the spiritual conflict (O me, my brother... nor anything on earth!)—there is first the burning sense of oppression arising from the consciousness of unfulfilled responsibilities, when Percivale is in a condition analogous to that of the Psalmist in his unrepentant state, whose "moisture is like the drought in summer." He, breaks through this, at the expense of her happiness and his, and we have the recoil of wounded feeling; he hates all life and duty, and all but her. But when he is joined with Galahad, and fairly embarked in the pursuit of an unearthly object, he forgets all else."—Elsdale, p. 67f.

25, 17.—**yule.** The word means in A. S. (*gēol*) 'Christmas,' and is still a common name in Scotland for that season. Yule was originally the heathen festival of the winter solstice, commemorated especially by burning large fires, and this custom was preserved even when the festival took on a Christian character. The English observances at yule, including the burning of the yule-log, are described in the Irving's essay *Christmas Eve* in "The Sketch Book." Tennyson refers elsewhere to the yule fires,

'Like the heart of a great fire at Yule.'
—*Marriage of Geraint.*

At the yule festivities, the poor were welcomed to the lord's hall. Scott says,

"Then opened wide the baron's hall
To vassal, tenant, serf, and all;
Power laid his rod of rule aside,
And Ceremony doffed his pride."

But yule past (notice the propriety of 'cold'), the poor returned to their poverty.

25, 19.—**And this am I.** That is 'content.' The monk, too, as a poor man (cf. 23, 16) is satisfied with a little affection from Percivale, who has given all his passion to the Grail.

26, 1.—**cast her aside...like weed.** The construction by which closely related parts are separated by a phrase or clause is a mannerism with Tennyson. It may be noticed in 'but thee...I knew,' 2, 4ff; 'tho' never maiden glow'd...With such a fervent flame of human love,' 4, 5 ff., etc. Macaulay thinks (p. 31) it serves often to make a speech more dramatic, but it is more probable that it is entirely a device of style intended to remove the language more from the language of to-day, and thereby to give an archaic tinge to the narrative.

Notice here that the bride is a flower ('sweetness') but cast aside as if a weed.

26, 3.—**want.** 'Lack.'

26, 3f.—**the warmth of double life, etc.** The warm affections of married life are denied the monk, whose affectionate

heart, however, is unsatisfied by the 'hard' brethren of his monastery. He thinks that in married happiness ('a life so rich') there is a love infinitely sweet, the thought of which, because unattainable, plagues him.

26, 4f.—**something sweet...sweetness.** This is a parallel expression to 'distance beyond distance,' 5, 19.

26, 6.—**too earthlywise.** In 'too worldly a way' for one vowed to heaven. ('Wise' in these adverbial compounds is only a variant spelling of *—ways*; cf. 'straightway.')

26, 8.—**badger in his earth.** The badger haunts deep woods, and burrows its nest deep into the earth,—“a well-formed domicile, consisting of more than one apartment, the single entrance to which is by a deep, oblique, and even tortuous excavation.”

26, 9f.—**despite All fast.** Cf. 5, 2ff. The monk saw about him always the things of earth; his fasting and penance brought him no wonderful vision. The thought is inconsequent, as in other speeches of Ambrosius, whose expression is not equal to the new thoughts that crowd upon him from Percivale's narrative.

SIR BORS'S QUEST.

26, 13.—**pelican.** It is a large duck-shaped bird, with an enormous pouch attached to its bill and throat, into which it scoops its fishy prey. In Malory one of Sir Bors's experiences in the quest was his sight of a pelican “upon an old tree and it was passing dry. without leaves, and the bird sat above, and had birds, the which were dead for hunger. So smote he himself with his beak till that he died among his birds. And the young birds took the life by the blood of the great bird.” (xvi. 6). This myth of the pelican is very old, and has made the bird a symbol of charity and even of Christ, who shed his blood for us. The emblem in Bors's casque is therefore significant of his character, as we see in the lines, 27, 2ff.

26, 16.—**each made joy of either.** Not, I fear, good English,

unless Tennyson's name makes it. 'Each' with a correlative 'other' is common, and 'either' with 'other' is not rare.

"Of either's colour was the other queen."

—Shakspeare. *Lucrece*, 66.

The poet is usually more fortunate than Spenser, whose 'archaisms' are often not archaic.

26, 19.—**maddening what he rode.** This periphrasis is very like that in *Geraint and Enid*,

'Half ridden off with by the thing he rode.'

26, 22.—**sluggard...a lion in the way.** This alludes to Prov. 26. 13. The sluggard made the lion an excuse for not going forth to his work; but Lancelot having delayed to put away his sin now feels—for a time—the danger of delay, and rides lest his sin spring on him again to destroy his good resolve.

27, 3.—**his former madness.** This is narrated in Malory. Guinevere had bitterly reproached Lancelot for his supposed treachery in loving Elaine, daughter of Pellam (note 6, 16, 'Galahad'), and her remarks drove him mad. "He ran forth he wist not whither, and was wild wood (mad) as ever was man; and so he ran two year, and never man might have grace to know him" (xi. 8). His kinsfolk sought him in vain "in forests and in wildernesses and in wastes" (xi. 10). Once in his wanderings Lancelot by chance came into the town of Corbin, and fighting the people of the town, took refuge, sorely wounded, in the castle. But this was the castle of Pellam, guardian of the Grail,—the wonderful Grail castle—and Lancelot, laid beside the holy vessel, was healed in body and mind (xii. 4).

Tennyson, not adopting the account of Galahad's birth, throws the whole burden of Lancelot's madness on the struggle of his conscience with his sin:—

'The great and guilty love he bare the Queen
In battle with the love he bare his lord,
Had marr'd his face, and marked it ere its time.
Another sinning on such heights with one,

The flower of all the west and all the world,
 Had been the sleeker for it: but in him
 His mood was often like a fiend, and rose
 And drove him into wastes and solitudes
 For agony, who was yet a living soul.'

—*Lancelot and Elaine.*

27, 5.—**kith.** The word formerly meant 'acquaintance,' 'a person one knows' (A. S. *cyth*, knowledge). But by association with 'kin' and its disuse except in the phrase 'kith and kin,' we have forgotten its real meaning and take it to mean 'relative.'

27, 8.—**so.** An archaic use of 'so' = 'provided.' Cf. 'so that,' 25, 19. It is Chaucerian,

'And, so ye wil me now to wyve take' (take me to wife).

—*Legend of Good Women*, 1319.

27, 9.—**Cup of healing.** See 3, 13; 5, 1; and note 1, 1.

27, 11.—**after.** 'In longing for.'

27, 12.—**If God would send, etc.** Bors's thought in indirect narration.

27, 13.—**the Quest and he, etc.** "All is welcome, said Sir Bors, that God sendeth me."—Malory, xvi. 6.

27, 17.—**our race and blood.** The Britons clung to their Druidical religion in the far-off mountain fastnesses long after the flat country was christianized.

27, 18.—**Paynim.** An archaic or poetical form, 'pagan.' (Mid. E. *painime*, used as an adj. as well as a noun, O. Fr. *païenime*, *païenisme*, *paganisme*. paganism; from Lat. *pagan-us*, a heathen, originally a rustic (hence 'peasant'). 'Pagan' is therefore the learned, and 'paynim' the popular, form from the same root, but the latter was originally a noun.

27, 18f.—**their circles, and the stones...to heaven.** At Stonehenge and Avebury in Wiltshire, Stennis in Orkney, Carnac in Brittany, and other places, standing stones are found, set on end in the form usually of two concentric circles, approached by two parallel rows of upright stones.

Sometimes several standing stones are crowned by a large flat one, making what is called a cromlech, or more properly a

dolmen (Celt. *daul*, table, *maen*, stone). The older antiquaries thought these circles and dolmens were Druid temples and Druid sacrificial altars. To-day the latter are believed to have been merely burial-cells, but some still hold that the former were temples and that the circular form is significant of the Druidical worship of the sun.

27, 20f.—**old magic...stars.** This is Cæsar's account of the Druids at the time of his invasion of Britain: "*Multa præterea de sideribus atque eorum motu...disputant.*" They debate, moreover, concerning the stars and their motions. *De Bell. Gall.*, vi. 14.

27, 24ff.—**"what other fire than he,"** etc. The sun, which they worship. See note 27. 18. The words are quoted from the pagans' scoffing remarks to Percivale.

28, 1.—**the sea rolls.** Referring to the tides.

28, 2.—**chafed.** Cf. the literal meaning in 90, 17.

28, 5.—**bounden.** The strong verb bind once had naturally the strong participle 'bounden,' but this full form of the participle is retained, except in intentional archaisms, only in phrases like "bounden duty," Elsewhere Tennyson uses the full form,

'Laugh'd not but thrust him bounden of door.'

'Thus to be bounden, so to see her face.'

—*Pelleas and Ettare.*

28, 7.—**hollow-ringing heaven.** 'Hollow' applied to noise denotes the deep, low reverberation of sound as in cavern. Here it is of the song of the wind in the vault of heaven—"the hollow-vaulted dark.'

28, 11.—**Glimmer'd.** A favourite picturesque word. Cf.

'By a red rock glimmers the Hall.'

—*Maud*, iv. ii.

'The casement slowly grows a glimmering square.'

—*The Princess*, iv.

'By glimmering lanes and walls of canvass, led.'

—*id.*, v.

28, 11.—**the streaming scud.** The 'scud' is the small clouds

driven by the stormy wind below the main mass of storm-cloud. (The verb *scud*, to run or move swiftly (cf. 106, 11), is the Danish *skyde*, and is the same word as A.S. *scēotan*, Mod. Eng. *shoot*.) 'Streaming' is moving swiftly, as in 106, 16 and,

'And hill and wood
Went ever streaming by him till the gloom.'
—*Pelleas and Ettare*.

28, 13.—**seven clear stars . . . Table Round**. See note 10, 24. The association of Arcturus with Arthur (Arthurus), easily led to the association of the constellation of the Great Bear (or Wagon, or Plough) likewise with his name. Thus the constellation is named 'Arthur's Wain' in Welsh. Its apparent revolution round the North Star would then easily suggest the idea of the Round Table.

28, 21.—**grace**. 'Favour.'

28, 22f.—**in colour like**, etc. Cf. notes 1, 16 ; 16, 18.

The Allegory. The key-note to Sir Bors's character, that which makes him worthy of the sight of the Grail, is humility and self-renunciation, love of others. (Cf. 27, 6ff ; 28, 18f.)

28, 27.—**let him go**. Tennyson makes no use of Bors's experiences as given by Malory, but invents the whole of the preceding narrative.

29, 1.—**To whom the monk**. Cf. 3, 17 and note.

29, 3.—**Sir Bors it was**. Cf. 2, 23ff.

29, 4.—**mighty reverend**. 'Mighty' here is used adverbially, the words being equivalent to 'with impressive reverence'; but the colloquial use has hurt the value of this good adverb. The same construction, but with a shadow of difference in meaning, is in,

'With half-allowing smiles for all the world
And mighty courteous in the main.'
—*Aylmer's Field*.

29, 5ff.—**his eyes . . . Smiled with his lips**. This was a smile like the Miller's,

'Gray eyes lit up
With summer lightnings of a soul
So full of summer warmth, so glad,
So healthy, sound, and clear and whole.'
—*The Miller's Daughter*.

Not 'the hollow smile and frozen sneer,' or 'the heart-hiding smile' or 'hard-set smile' that we find with cold insincere people that Tennyson at times depicts.

29, 7.—**a cloud.** This. I take, is the sorrow that for the time overshadows Sir Bors's smile, naturally a sunny smile

29, 10.—**sooth.** 'Truth.' (A.S. *sōth*, truth.)

THE RETURN OF THE KNIGHTS.

29, 14ff.—**living words...house.** They are words to be treasured in memory, not allowed 'in one ear and out another.'

29, 18.—**trode.** Archaic form of 'trod.'

29, 19.—**heaps of ruin.** etc. From the storm, 30, 6ff.

29, 19.—**unicorn.** An animal once fabled to inhabit India. It is represented in heraldry, as every Englishman knows, as a horse with a lion's tail and with a single horn (*unicornus*) growing out of its forehead. Here, as with the following words, the carven stone ornaments.

29, 20.—**basilisk.** A cockatrice (see following note). A fabulous reptile, hatched, it was said, by a serpent from a cock's egg, and inhabiting the deserts of Africa. Its breath or its look was fatal. It is represented in heraldry as shaped like a cockatrice, but with a tail ending with a dragon's head. It took its name from a spot on its head, said Pliny, resembling a crown. (Gk. *basileus*, king.)

29, 20.—**cockatrice** (*cok a trice*). In heraldry it is represented with the head, legs, feet of a cock, with the wings of a dragon, and the body and tail of a serpent. (The word is really a corruption of L. *calcatrrix*, 'tracker,' used to render the Gk. *ichneumon*, and associated in the middle ages with 'crocodile.' In the initial syllable (Fr. *coq.* cock) and the association with the crocodile, whose eggs are hatched in the sand, we have no doubt the source of the story of the origin of the fabulous cockatrice, as told in the preceding note.)

29, 21.—**talbot.** In heraldry, a dog, usually a mastiff, with hanging ears, tail curling over its back. Its head, when used

on crests, is represented as having a forked tongue. (From the dog in the arms of the Talbot family.)

29, 22.—**Raw.** ‘Fresh from the fracture.’

29, 23.—**daïs-throne.** The throne on the daïs (*dā'is*) or platform at the upper end of the hall reserved, as the custom was, as the highest place of honour.

29, 25.—**tithe.** Lit. ‘tenth’ (A.S. *tēotha*, for *teontha*, tenth). Hence, ‘a very small part.’

30, 2.—**bad me hail.** ‘Hail’ in this use is a survival of the old English salutation ‘*Wes hāl!*’ ‘be hale!’

30, 4.—**chance.** The word is originally neutral in sense, ‘that which happens or befalls.’ (L. *cadentia*, falling.)

30, 5.—**flooding ford.** A ford impassable by reason of a flood. For this intransitive use of ‘flood,’ cf.

‘The Nilus would have risen before his time,
And flooded at our nod.’

—*Dream of Fair Women.*

30, 7.—**the strange devices of our kings.** See the quotation from *Gareth and Lynette*, note 10, 11.

The Allegory. Camelot, the fair city of the imagination. is no longer the same. The thunderstorm which witnessed Galahad’s translation and Percivale’s and Bors’s glimpse of the Grail at the same moment wrought fateful changes to the city. Old ideals are destroyed and even the cause of Arthur and the Soul is weakened by the wasting of spiritual strength on false objects (cf. 20, 10). See also p. 154, Maccallum.

30, 15.—**into the quiet life.** Cf. 1, 4.

30, 16.—**sharply turning.** One foolish critic remarks of this: ‘Why should he have turned away so sharply from Sir Percivale who had been recounting his adventures with great courtesy... is not evident; except that Mr. Tennyson wished to be picturesque, and did not consider that it is useless to report any outward gesture, unless some inward trait is implied in that gesture. Now all that could be implied is rudeness or perturbation in Arthur.’—*Quart. Rev.*, Jan., 1870.

SIR GAWAIN'S QUEST.

30, 18.—**Gawain.** He was son of Arthur's sister, Bellicent, wife of King Lot of Orkney, and brother to Gareth. Scholars have had no charge against Tennyson more serious than his perversion of the character of Gawain. In the oldest romances he is a mirror of chivalry, classed with Arthur as "knights good and courteous"; in the Grail quest he stands next to Percivale and in practical religion is superior to him; in one romance he is not only the mirror of courtesy but of purity and knightly honour. Some traces of a change of character do appear even in the older literature, tending to emphasize Gawain's devotion to the ladies, so that a touch of the 'light of love' can be seen. But in Tennyson he is degraded in some respects to the level of Modred. While some old-time knightly virtues are left—skill and courage in the fight, indignation at cowardly wrong-doing—his courtesy becomes

'Courtesy with a touch of traitor in it.'

—*Lancelot and Elaine.*

Nor is he 'often loyal to his word,' and moreover holds, as he told Pelleas, that 'women be so light.'

'Women are light,' so the man who swore 'louder than the rest' found his merry maidens more to his earthly nature than the Quest. The highest manifestation of spiritual power brought him and them only temporary discomfort. He typifies the frivolous and wanton disposition, for whom no spiritual exaltation is possible.

30, 19.—**communed with a saintly man.** In Malory, Gawain had many fights and experiences, of which Tennyson says nothing except his confession to the hermit Nacien. Nacien told Gawain and Ector: "Knights of poor faith and wicked belief,—these three things failed, charity, abstinence, and truth, therefore ye may not attain that high adventure of the Sancgreal" (xvi. 4).

30, 21.—**awearied.** A poetical doublet of 'wearied.'

30, 24.—**tenting-pin.** The 'tent-pin,' or stout pin to which the guy-ropes of the tent are fastened to hold it to the ground.

31, 2.—**My twelvemonth and a day.** Cf. 9, 5 and note.

SIR LANCELOT'S QUEST.

31, 4f.—**Sir Bors...Lancelot.** The meeting of Bors and Lancelot has a pathos in Malory which the Tennysonian version lacks. There Bors returns to tell Lancelot how with his own hands he had buried his son Galahad. "Ye and I will never depart in sunder," said Lancelot then, "whilst our lives may last. Sir, said he, I will as ye will" (xvii. 23).

31, 5.—**athwart.** 'Through and across.'

31, 10f.—**I may not speak of it...eyes.** All Bors's thoughts are of Lancelot. He had learnt meanwhile from Lancelot of his partial success; and his own humility, his love of his great kinsman, and grief at his unsucces check any words of exultation. Concern for the touch of madness likewise occupies him.

31, 14.—**like him of Cana.** Cf. John 2. 1-10; but Percivale's comparison must not be taken too closely—the 'ruler of the feast' only asserted—not knowing the miracle—that the bridegroom had kept back the good wine.

31, 17.—**hath this Quest avail'd.** 'Has it been efficacious' in winning you the Grail. (The sense is here nearer the etymological meaning in the Fr. *valoir*, to be worth.)

31, 19.—**methought.** 'It seemed to me.' (A. S. *thyncan*, an impersonal verb followed by the indir. obj., to seem.)

31, 20.—**dying fire.** Gleam of a madness not yet extinct.

32, 3f.—**wholesome flower And poisonous.** This figure recalls (Littledale) Shelley's similar comparison:—

"Good and ill like vines entangled are,
So that their grapes may oft be plucked together "
—*Merenghi*

The thought meets us in a different form in *Lancelot and Elaine*:—

'His honour rooted in dishonour stood,
And faith unfaithful kept him falsely true.'

32, 5.—**not to be plucked asunder.** Cf. the parable of the tares, Matt. 13. 24ff.

32, 12.—**I would work.**—‘Act,’ ‘do,’ a frequent sense of the word in older English.

32, 14.—**twain.** Archaic,—‘two.’ (A.S. *twēgen* (whence ‘twain’) is the masc. corresponding to the neut. *twā*, two, which has been generalized.)

32, 27.—**drove.** Cf. 16, 7 and note, and 33, 9.

32, 16.—**whipt me unto waste fields.** “Lancelot, torn between his horror of his sin and his love of it, seeking the Grail that he may be free from his sin, yet knowing that he does not wish to be freed, is driven into a madness by the inward battle.”—Stopford Brooke, p. 335.

33, 3.—**blackening.** The word has an unusual active meaning ‘shining black.’ Cf.

‘Bark an answer, Britain’s raven ! bark and blacken innumerable.’

—*Boödicea.*

33, 6.—**I will embark and . . . lose myself.** Again the test of the Grail satisfied in self-renunciation. Cf. 8, 11 ; 25, 15 ; 27, 8–13. But Lancelot says this only in his ‘madness,’ and not with his whole nature.

32, 12.—**shingle.** Coarse water-worn gravel on the shore. The wave sweeps the stones against one another so that they ‘grind in the surge,’—hence the name, (Norse *singla*, to tinkle.)

33, 14.—**Carbonek.** The castle of King Pellam, hereditary guardian of the Grail. Malory’s description is quoted in note 34, 27.

33, 21.—**sudden-flaring.** ‘Bristling up like tongues of flame.’ Cf. 43, 8.

33, 26.—**piecemeal.** ‘In pieces.’ (In A. S. *mæ’lum* dat. pl. of *mæ’l*, measure, was used as an adverbial suffix ; as in *drop mæ’lum*, drop by drop.)

34, 2.—**the sounding hall.** The epithet is Homeric :

“The sounding corridor.”

—*Odys.*, vii., 345.

34, 4f.—**No bench . . . knight.** Lancelot notices the contrast to Arthur's hall. Cf. 10, 15ff. and note.

34, 6.—**the tall oriel.** A recess from a room in the form of a large bay window projecting from the outer wall of a building and supported on brackets. It was at first richly gilded—*L. aureolum*, from *aureus*, golden. The architectural effect is delightful and the oriel is a favourite with the poets.

34, 8.—**high o'er me as a lark.** This beautifully suggests, by the characteristics of the lark's song, the voice of a sweet unseen singer in the lofty tower. (See Wordsworth's *To a Skylark*, quoted in the Appendix.)

34, 17.—**It gave.** 'It gave way,' 'yielded.'

34, 18.—**seventimes-heated furnace.** Cf. Dan. 3. 19.

34, 22.—**pall'd.** 'Enveloped' as in a pall. (Lat. *palla*, cloak.)

34, 23.—**wings and eyes.** As if cherubim. This experience recalls parts of Ezekiel's vision. Ezek. 10. 11f.

34, 25.—**I saw . . . saw.** 'I saw the real Grail, not a madman's vision of it.'

34, 27.—**This quest was not for me.** In Malory there is much beside this final scene of Lancelot's quest. Lancelot and Percivale were overthrown by Galahad in disguise (xiii. 17); afterwards Lancelot saw a wounded knight healed in a chapel by the Holy Grail (18), and hearing a voice bidding him depart, he sets out in despair because of his sins—"mine old sin hindreth me" (19). Then he confessed even his mortal sin to a hermit, how he loved a queen "and for her sake would I do battle were it right or wrong"; and the priest absolved him (20). Lancelot rode on his way in penance and humility, enduring the perils of battle and imprisonment (xv.) Then lying down at the water of Mortoise, taking 'the adventure God would send him, he was told in a vision to enter a ship in which lay Percivale's sister dead. Thither came Galahad. But he was summoned by a messenger to depart for ever from his father, and as he left, a wind rose and drove the ship for a month through the sea (xvii. 13). [Up to this point Tennyson

has used almost nothing of Malory, but now he follows him closely.] "At midnight Launcelot arrived at a castle...and there was a postern opened towards the sea...open without any keeping, save two lions kept the entry; and the moon shone clear. Anon he heard a voice that said, Launcelot, go out of the ship, and enter into the castle, where thou shalt see a great part of thy desire. Then he ran to his arms...and went to the gate, and saw the lions. Then set he hand to sword. Then there came a dwarf suddenly, and smote him on the arm so sore that the sword fell...and he heard a voice say, Oh man of evil faith and poor belief, wherefor trowest (believest) thou more on thy harness than in thy Maker?...Then Launcelot said, Fair Father Jesus Christ, I thank thee...that thou reproved me of my misdeed. Then took he again his sword, and put it up...and made a cross in his forehead, and came to the lions, and they made semblant to do him harm. Notwithstanding he passed them without hurt, and entered into the castle...At last he came to a chamber (xvii. 14)...enforced him nickle to undo the door...and heard a voice which sang so sweetly that it seemed none earthly thing...Joy and honour be to the Father of Heaven! Then Launcelot kneeled down...Then he saw the chamber door open, and there came out a great clearness...as all the torches of the world had been there...And a voice said, Flee not, and enter not... Then he saw in the midst of the chamber a table of silver, and the holy vessel covered with red samite, and many angels about it, ...and before the holy vessel a good man clothed as a priest, and it seemed that he was at the sacring of the mass. (As the priest held up Christ to the people, as it seemed to Lancelot, he appeared to be too heavily charged, and Lancelot rushed in to his aid, but) when he came nigh he felt a breath...intermeddled with fire, which smote him sore in the visage...and therewith fell to the earth...having lost the power of his body, and his hearing, and his saying (15)." (They carried him out, and twenty-four days afterward, having recovered, he was told), "never shall ye see of the Sancgreal no

more than ye have seen." And thanking God he took leave of Pellam—for this was in the Grail castle—and departed to Logris, and thence to Arthur's court (xvii. 16, 17.)

The Allegory. The symbolism of Lancelot's quest is the soul seeking a union with God in passionate effort, driven by remorse of conscience. Such a soul finds no quiet for his madness even in the sanctuary, and strives to take, as it were, the kingdom of heaven by violence. Did Lancelot achieve the Grail? Even he himself did not know, but knew that with his sin and madness it was impossible. These away, he might have seen it. Mr. Elsdale is here too ingenious, yet his interpretation is suggestive:—"The beating down by little men, mean knights, shows us the state of spiritual weakness to which the soul is reduced by acquiescence in its darling sin. The naked shore, where nothing but coarse grasses grow, is like the dreary spiritual waste through which such a soul must wander, so long as a serious effort is not made. The blast is surely the setting in of this necessary conflict, and the seven days' voyage along the storm-tossed sea, the transition of struggle and doubt. The lions, . . . with the interpreting voice . . . show us the first necessary condition if this sea of doubt is to be safely passed, namely *Faith*. The empty hall beyond tells of a withdrawal from the world for quiet and solitary communion with the infinite and the eternal. So, also, the moon shining aloft, above the rolling sea, whispers to the soul, in its calm serenity, of brighter, better things, far above all this turmoil and struggle and perplexity. The whole scene speaks of *Meditation* and *Prayer*. And now the clear, sweet voice in the eastern tower—the tower nearest the rising sun—sings of *Hope*, and the myriad steps up which Lancelot seems to climb with pain for ever tell of *Endurance*. But though admitted to the very threshold, he sees not at last the Holy Grail, or, if he sees, it is veiled and covered, to remind him of the necessity of *Purity*."—Elsdale, p. 69f.

35, 1f.—**ceasing . . . long silent.** A Homeric touch, cf. "So spake he, and dead silence fell on all, and they were spell-bound throughout the shadowy hall."—*Odys.* xi. 333f.

35, 6.—**my liege.** For 'my liege lord,' as in Shakspeare,

'Most mighty liege, and my companion peers.'

—*Richard II.*, i., iii. 93.

(O.Fr. *lige seignur*, the lord of a free band (Germ. *ledig*, free).)

ARTHUR AND THE QUEST.

35, 7.—**Hath Gawain fail'd.** Gawain had failed in *Lancelot and Elaine*, and the king had to tell him,

'Obedience is the courtesy due to kings.'

35, 8.—**foughten field.** The full form of the past part. of the strong verb fight; an archaism. Cf.

"And not a foughten Field."

—Drayton (1613), *Polyolbion*, iii. 137.

'As in this glorious and well-foughten field.'

—Shakspeare, *Henry V.*, iv. vi.

35, 13.—**the blue-eyed cat.** "Perhaps Tennyson had been reading Darwin's *Origin of Species*, ch. 1. p. 9. : 'Some instances of correlation are quite whimsical: thus cats which are entirely white and have blue eyes are generally deaf; but it has lately been pointed out by Mr. Tait that this is confined to the males.'"—*Littledale*, p. 243.

35, 16.—**the blameless King.** Cf. *Geraint and Enid*, where Geraint

'Fell...

'In battle, fighting for the blameless king.'

35, 22.—**seen according to their sight.** The echo of biblical phrases, cf. 1 Cor. 3, etc. It has been paraphrased (*Littledale*),

"In the blissful vision each shall share

As much of glory as his soul can bear."

—Dryden, *Eleonora*.

"The vision comes to each according to the soul of each. Lancelot, who made the vow to seek the vision of pure holiness and love, while his heart loves his sin, sees the Grail covered, but sees it as holy wrath and fire, as swift and stern condemnation. That which is sweet and gentle to Galahad, ... soft rose ... to the sister of Percivale—is to Lancelot a stormy glare, a

heat. . . from which he swoons, blasted, and burnt, and blinded."
—Stopford Brooke, p. 329.

35, 23.—**fiery prophet.** Isaiah, Ezekiel, etc.

35, 24.—**sacred madness of the bard.** A reference to the belief that the poets were touched with madness by the gods so that they might become oracles of inspiration. The classics have many references to this divine inspiration. Plato wrote: 'The poet is a light and winged and holy thing, and there is no invention in him until he has been inspired and is out of his senses and the mind no longer in him: when he has not attained to this state he is powerless,' *Ion*. In Homer, "the minstrel inspired by the God, began," *Odyss.*, viii, 499. So too Quintilian: "the bards instinct with the divine breath," xii. 10, 24. This belief lives in Shakspeare's line,

"The poet's eye, in a fine frenzy, rolling."

—*Midsummer Night's Dream*, v. i.

36, 1.—**could but speak. . . chord.** Prophet and bard could utter their message and their music—God-inspired—only by poor human means, like the lyre or harp to which they sang, therefore imperfectly. The knights told of God's vision—if such it was—the truth as their natures permitted them to see it.

36, 4.—**Nay—but thou errest.** Cf. 32, 3ff.; 35, 5.

36, 22.—**into the silent life.** Cf. 1, 5.

36, 24.—**his chair desires him here in vain.** Cf. Job 7. 10; and Arthur to Balin, in *Balin and Balan*,

'Thy chair, a grief to all the brethren, stands
Vacant.'

36, 25.—**otherwise.** Used 'otherwise' by Tennyson,
e. g.

'I know transplanted human worth
Will bloom to profit, otherwise.'

—*In Memoriam*, lxxxii.

37, 1.—**some among you.** Cf. 12, 12.

37, 3ff.—**Not easily. . . rose again.** This speech, the essence of the idea of the duty attached to power, is the highest ethical idea of this century. Tennyson puts it forward powerfully

as the reason for Arthur's absence from the quest, which in Malory he could not have undertaken successfully because of sin. Tennyson's 'blameless king' finds his duty close at hand—whatever his hand finds to do, this he will do with his might. This done, there is the true rapture of the spirit, not to be sought after, but coming unbidden in the midst of life and work and love; a rapture of true religion more blessed than the vision of the Grail; for in it the earthly falls away, and the spirit freed from its tenement of clay knows itself a spirit and immortal and real, and knows that God is real and Christ is real—no vision but the Eternal Truth.

The mystical thought here is the expression of personal experience on Tennyson's part, which he describes elsewhere; as in,

'For more than once, when I
Sat all alone, revolving in myself
The word that is the symbol of myself,
The mortal limit of the Self was loosed,
And past into the Nameless, as a cloud
Melts into Heaven. I touch'd my limbs, the limbs
Were strange not mine—and yet no shade of doubt,
But utter clearness, and thro' loss of Self
The gain of such large life as match'd with ours
Were Sun to spark unshadowable in words,
Themselves but shadows of a shadow-world.'

—*The Ancient Sage.*

37, 4.—hind. 'Farm-labourer.' (A.S. *hine*, servants.)

37, 18.—I knew not all he meant. Percivale's ideal was the Grail, so that he was shut out from a full understanding of the higher ideal of the king.

THE GRAIL AS TENNYSON VIEWED IT.

Reviewing the poem in its relation to the original, we see that in a sense Tennyson clings to the old legend of the Grail—the Saviour's cup, endued with magical properties and attainable only by those who had perfected themselves in ascetic purity and self-renunciation. This ideal of life was undoubtedly the

highest conception that the Middle Ages attained. Even Richard of Hampole, the most liberal of English religious writers of his time, while recognizing the use and beauty of the Active Life, placed it finally below the Contemplative Life.* That ascetic ideal is not the ideal of this nineteenth century. This century is permeated with the spirit of work ; its ideal is the Active Life. "The latest Gospel in this world is," says Carlyle, "Know thy Work and do it... All Work is sacred ; Labour, wide as the Earth, has its summit in Heaven." This age, moreover, is an age of science, of inquiry tinged with incredulity. To us the whole affair of the Grail must appear only the phantom of weak superstition and sick imagination. Yet to the mystical, high-wrought ascetics of the Middle Ages a belief in the Grail, its holy origin, the sublime rapture that the sight of it procured, all this was not only possible but probable. Indeed the very rise and spread of the legend shows how well it accorded with the mystical beliefs of many of the most spiritually-minded people of those darker ages.

Tennyson therefore in taking up the theme of the Grail was met by two difficulties ; first, the difference of the old ideal of life from the new ideal ; second, the essential improbability of the whole Grail legend. These two difficulties had to be overcome or the poet would have lost touch with his age and become a mere legend-monger rather than the great and serious poet. Both these difficulties have been overcome with wonderful skill.

In the other Idylls the poet is the narrator ; in *The Holy Grail* the ostensible narrator of all the quests is a Knight of the Round Table. Percivale had the superstitions and ideals of his time, and his belief in the Grail must consequently appear natural and true to dramatic art. But here our scientific spirit steps in to ask what basis Percivale or anyone else had for believing in the appearance of the Grail. He must have been mistaken, we say, could the mistake have been honestly made? The reason for this honest mistake is implicit throughout all Percivale's narrative. Percivale's sister, worn with prayer and fast-

**Prose Treatises*, E. E. Text Soc.

ing, sees the Grail in a flood of moonlight ; the Knights of the Round Table, expectant of miracle, persuade themselves during a sudden thunder-storm that they have seen the Grail, but covered ; Galahad, the mystical enthusiast and ascetic sees the Grail, first in the lightning flash, and afterwards bears the image with him everywhere ; Percivale, under the magnetic influence of Galahad, sees the Grail, in successive flashes of a terrific storm bursting on the wildest mountain gorges, from which he returns in a daze ; Bors sees the Grail, followed by thunder ; Lancelot, half-mad, is driven by his madness alone and afar, and in his madness sees the Grail with many of the phenomena of a thunderbolt. Thus everywhere we have a physical basis for the mistake of the knights—the misinterpretation of natural phenomena by superstitious, mystical enthusiasts. But it is an honest mistake. It is a mistake which in a sense did honour to the mistaken. It implied religious enthusiasm, high-wrought spiritual longings after virtues, the highest of virtues when rightly guided. Spiritual ecstasy was required to make such a mistake, and to the sensual, the earthy, such spiritual ecstasy was impossible, and their not seeing the Grail, in those days when religion was so turned to vision and miracle, is their own condemnation. Nowhere does Tennyson even imply that the sight of the Grail is not a mistake. Arthur, who stands for the clear-sighted vision of truth, is represented away from the Hall when the Grail appeared there, though in Malory he is represented as present and seeing all that his knights saw. He never acknowledges the reality of the Grail : it is a 'vision' for the nun and Galahad ; they have seen a sign—he does not say from heaven—but 'a sign to maim this Order.' When his knights have testified to the sight of the Grail, he is incredulous still, yet with a generous incredulity—

‘If indeed there came a sign from heaven,
Blessed are Bors, Lancelot and Percivale...
As ye saw it, ye have spoken truth.’

He knew his knights, knew that Galahad alone of all his Table could really have felt the call (cf. l. 5), rising from the

depths of his ascetic holiness, to follow the Grail, seeking elsewhere the life of mystical communion with God impossible amid the rough practical duties of his Order. But for the others what a fatal mistake! for his own work what misfortune! It is the knowledge of this fateful error that gives the whole tragic pathos to the king's speech at the close of the Grail. His knights had sworn to go on this mistaken quest, he had bidden them go; now to be strong when few survive, when his best knights return still victims of a delusion, to stand by his task, to knit together the scattered remnants of his power, this is Arthur at his greatest—heroic, single-handed, steady-minded, fighting Fate.

Arthur, then, never believed there had been a veritable appearance of the Grail, though he recognized that his knights had endured a terrible spiritual experience of some sort. Tennyson, of course, did not believe it, and implicitly assigns an explanation from physical phenomena for the mistaken beliefs of the knights. What of Percivale who, with his whole soul, did believe in it?

The Grail, to Percivale, was a reality, a Cup with the most sacred associations and with divine powers, consequently the highest spiritual manifestation of God that his eye could witness. Its attainment signified a perfection in chastity, in patient endurance, in self-renunciation. It might come or go, it still had the potency of the highest spiritual good and the highest spiritual rapture. Thus unconsciously the quest of the Grail had to assume a symbolic value: the Cup typified spiritual union with God; the quest became a test of the soul; and the experiences of seeking it became typical of all our struggles towards the highest. Percivale's narrative, then, shadows forth the experiences of the spiritual life, and though he himself apparently was not conscious of the double meaning, his whole story of the quest of the Grail, as the poet makes him tell it, becomes a subtle allegory in which the soul fights its way through pride and sin and selfishness and remorse towards the eternal God.

RECOLLECTIONS OF THE ARABIAN NIGHTS.

Its first publication.—This poem has an interest other than its poetical worth, in having been published in the first volume the poet gave to the world over his own name—*Poems, chiefly Lyrical*, 1830. It was in the company of *The Poet*, *The Sleeping Beauty* (afterward expanded into *The Day-Dream*), *Mariana*, and other well-known lyrics, composed by the poet before he had completed his twenty-first year.

The text of this first edition, where it differs from the present, is given from Dr. Rolfe's collation.

Source of the poem.—The poem is an imaginative rendering of the chief scene in the tale of Noor-ed-Deen and Enees-el-Jelees, in the thirty-sixth night of the *Arabian Nights' Entertainments*. (Lane, I. vi.) Noor-ed-Deen had fled with his beautiful Persian slave Enees to Bagdad by boat. They landed among gardens, and following a long lane over which was "a covering of trellis-work of canes extending along the whole length," they came to the gate of a garden—the Garden of Delight of the Caliph Haroun. The sheik Ibraheem had compassion on them, invited them to enter. The Garden was magnificent with its lavish abundance of fruits, vines, and trees. Flowers of all kinds scented the air; the nightingale, dove, and blackbird sang to the murmur of the river. They feasted in the Caliph's Palace of Diversion, but the feast became a carouse. They illuminated the palace with its "eighty latticed windows, and eighty lamps suspended, and in the midst a great candlestick of gold." Haroun, from the city, beheld the palace "as it were a flame of fire, its light surpassing that of the moon." He went there, watched the revellers unobserved, and heard Enees play the lute in a manner to "inspire an idiot with intellect." He then disguises himself as a fisherman, enters the palace, serves them with

fish which he cooks, and then charmed with the ravishing singing of Enees and the generosity of Noor-ed-Deen he makes him sultan of El-Basrah, whence he had fled.

Its poetical worth.—Tainsh (p. 72) classes it among the group of Restorations or Reproductions, of which the subjects are old to literature, and, for the most part, to poetry. *The Recollections*, he adds, foreshadowed the power of detailed description, vivid and very pictorial, which shows itself fully in *The Palace of Art*. Bayne regards its linguistic opulence as a small matter “compared with the imagination required to plan and the fancy to execute such a work. The whole is a thing of the mind, a vision founded upon no fact, and yet we accompany the poet in his voyage down the Tigris with as distinct a realization of his whereabouts as if he were detailing the stages of a journey by boat between Oxford and Twickenham. We see the blaze of light falling in golden green upon the leaves, when suddenly the million tapers of the Caliphat illuminate the scene; and we, as well as the poet, are drawn in wondering curiosity until we are in the presence of the monarch,” p. 205.

The poem has another merit. It is a splendid tribute to the fascination of the stories known in English as *The Arabian Nights' Entertainments*. It voices the charm the book has for the imagination of youth, a spell woven from the gorgeous hues of Eastern magnificence, the mysterious luxuriance of Eastern vegetation, the beauty of dark Eastern women, and the pride of Eastern power. All these are wrought into this poem, which unrolls scene after scene till at last for a moment we are transported to the golden prime of Bagdat and into the presence of its Caliph, the good Haroun Alraschid.

38, 2.—**Arabian Nights.** A very old collection of Arabian stories by the name in Arabic of “A Thousand Nights and a Night.” They were translated into French by Gallard at the beginning of the eighteenth century, and from French into English. Of recent years English translations have been from the originals by Lane (1840) and Burton (1882-4).

38, 3.—**When the breeze...infancy.** The periphrasis suggests childhood with its airy fancy and glad careless morning spirit.

38, 5.—**tide...flowed back.** Cf. Milton,

“Time will run back and fetch the age of gold.”

—*Ode on the Nativity.*

38, 4.—**silken sail.** Cf. 49, 4.

38, 7.—**sheeny.** A Miltonic word, showing a trace of Tennyson's early reading.

“Earth's sons besiege the wall
Of sheeny Heaven.”

—Milton, *Death of a Fair Infant.*

(It is Spenser's “sheene,” from Mid. Eng. *schene*, A. S. *scēne* bright, splendid.)

38, 8.—**Adown.** Cf. 39, 13; 57, 3. An archaic form, which the aphetic form ‘down’ has driven out of use except in poetry. (A. S. *of+dūn*, ‘off the hill,’ hence ‘down.’) Scott uses it,

“His gorgeous collar hung adown.”

—*Marmion*, v. viii.

38, 9.—**Bagdat.** Bagdad(t) is situated on the Tigris, and was once the centre of a luxuriously fertile empire and of mighty industrial populations. Its foundation goes back to remote antiquity, but it owes its enlargement in the ninth century to its caliph Haroun Al-Raschid, who bridged the river and covered its east side with costly edifices, whose magnificent architecture still recalls

‘the golden prime
Of good Haroun Al-Raschid:

Its aspect to-day is in many respects not far removed from its ancient appearance:—

“Under the blue sunny sky the river view is very fine. The river itself is imposing from its breadth and volume, and in the gorgeous sunsets, with a sky of crimson flame and the fronds of dark date palms mirrored in its reddened waters, it looks really beautiful. The city is stately...The Tigris divides Baghdad into two unequal parts, and

though the city on the left bank has almost a monopoly of picturesque and somewhat stately irregularity in the houses of fair height, whose lattices and oriel windows overhang the stream from an environment of orange gardens, the dark date groves dignify the meaner buildings of the right bank." Bishop, *Journeys in Persia*, I., 29.

38, 9.—**fretted gold**. 'Gilded perforated or raised work in lace-like designs.' Cf.

"The roof was fretted gold."

—Milton, *Paradise Lost*, i.

38, 11.—**Mussulman**. The Pers. form of the Arabic *Muslim*; hence the same word as Moslem, one who professes submission (*islam*) to the faith of Mohammed.

38, 11.—**sworn**. Close, firm and devoted, as if bound by oath. Cf. "sworn friends." and,

"I am sworn brother, sweet,
To grim necessity."

—Shakspeare, *Rich. II.*, v. i.

38, 12.—**prime**. 'The time of greatest power and affluence.' (Fr. *prime*, L. *prima*, the first hour.) Cf.

"That cropp'd the golden prime of this sweet prince."

—*Richard III.*, i. ii. 248.

38, 13.—**Haroun Alraschid**. More properly, Harún er Rashid (Aaron the Orthodox). He was born in 763 and ruled from 786 till 809. Putting the affairs of his kingdom into wise hands, he gave himself up to pleasure, and made the court of Bagdad renowned for its scholars, musicians, and poets, whom his lavish hospitality attracted thither. History has shown him to have been a bloody tyrant, as in the massacre of his best rulers the Barmecides, but nothing can dispel the halo of romance that legend and story have woven about him and which glorifies his memory in *The Arabian Nights*.

38, 14.—**Anight**. 'By night,' 'nightly'; so in Shakspeare,

"Coming anight to Jane Smile."

—*As You Like It*, ii. iv. 48.

(It is A. S. *on nihte*, by night.)

38, 14.—**shallop**. A light boat, usually with masts and sails; cf. 49, 4.

38, 15.—**bloomed**. 'Covered with flowers.' Earlier poets like Dunbar and Crashaw used the word similarly.

38, 15f.—**drove the deeps**. "Pushed the waters before it" (Rowe-Webb); "drove over" (Rolfe). The latter is the more likely meaning, from the frequent use of 'drive' with ships to indicate motion; cf. 33, 9.

38, 17.—**citron-shadows**. The shadows of the citron-trees on the water. The citron-tree is a semi-tropical evergreen shrub with long pendent branches covered with pale-green oblong leaves.

38, 18.—**brim**. The edge of the full river.

38, 19.—**The costly doors flung**. Absolute construction,—'being flung'; so in 39, 1-2.

39, 1.—**Gold**. Referring to the rich ornamentation of the interior.

39, 3.—**In sooth**. 'In truth'; cf. 29, 11 and note.

39, 6.—**platans**. Or 'platane,'—the plane tree. "The oriental plane tree rises with a straight, smooth ('clear-stem'd') branching stem to a great height, with palmated leaves' (hence the name, Lat. *platanus*, broad).

39, 7.—**outlet**. From the river.

39, 9.—**sluiced**. Diverted into a sluice, or artificial chanrel. The word shows Tennyson's early study of Milton. Cf.

"Underneath had veins of liquid fire
Sluiced from the lake."

—*Paradise Lost*, i. 703.

39, 11.—**damask-work . . . inlay**. 'Damask' is woven work in which the elaborate design is raised above a ground of the same or almost the same colour; cf. note 65, 5. 'Inlay' is the decorative work produced by setting wood, ivory, or metal in a sunken pattern; especially used in furniture. The words picture the variegated bank of thick-woven flowers.

39, 12.—**braided blooms**. 'Flowers intricately entwined or tangled.' In the edition of 1830 this read 'breaded blosms';

·breaded' being a variation of 'breded,' plaited, both archaic words, and 'blosm,' an archaic form of 'blossom.'

39, 17.—**A motion from the river won.** A gentle current flowing from the river into the canal.

39, 18.—**Ridged.** 'Disturbed (the smooth canal) with a ripple.' 'Ridge' for wave is common; cf. 32, 26.

39, 19.—**star-strown calm.** Cf. Shelley,

"Till the calm rivers, lakes, and seas,
Like strips of the sky fallen through me on high,
Are each paved with the moon and these."

—*The Cloud.*

39, 20.—**night in night.** 'The darkness of the shadowy dome of foliage, deeper than the 'clearer light' of the stars.'

40, 5.—**Is rounded.** 'Expands till it becomes a rounded lake.'

40, 6.—**rivage** (*riv'adze*). 'Bank,' 'shore.' (Fr. from Lat. *ripa*, bank.) Shakspeare and Spenser used the word:

"Do but think
You stand upon the rivage."
—*Henry V. Prol.* iii.

"Throws forth upon the rivage."
—*Faerie Queen*, iv. vi.

40, 7.—**rillels.** A diminutive of 'rill'; it was used before by Browne in his *Pastorals*, ii. 3.

"Is not so sweet as rillels ever gliding."

40, 9.—**the central fountain.** Apparently an interior fountain supplies all these rills, which fall through low white arches into the lake.

40, 10.—**silver-chiming.** The original reading gives the compound without the hyphen. So elsewhere in almost every instance in the poem.

40, 10.—**seemed to shake...flints.** Rippled the water so that the shining stones at the bottom seemed to stir.

40, 11.—**prow** (*prō*). But the usual pronunciation is *prou*.

40, 16.—**vary-coloured.** 'Variegated.' (L. *varius*, various, color, colour.

40, 17.—**engrain'd.** The same word as 'ingrained,'—having an inlaid pattern.

40, 18.—**marge.** A poetical word, 'margin'; cf. 84, 20. (Fr. *marge*, Lat. *margo*, border, margin.) The picture in this and the preceding stanza recalls Keats.

"By many streams a little lake did fill,
Which round its marge reflected woven bowers."

—*Imitation of Spenser.*

40, 19.—**fluted.** 'Grooved vertically.'

40, 20.—**In order.** 'In regular rows.'

40, 22f.—**studded,** etc. 'Embossed with circles or coronets of blossoms.'

40, 23.—**tiars** (*tī'ar*). A poetical abbreviation of 'tiara,' (*tī ā'ra*). Originally a Persian turban; hence a coronet or any rich ornament for the head. (Gk. *tiara*, head-dress of Persian kings.) Milton used the abbreviated form,

"Of beaming golden rays, a golden tiar."

—*Paradise Lost*, iii.

41, 2.—**In closest coverture.** Affording the densest cover of shadowy forest. This use of 'coverture'='covering' is Shaksperian:—

"So angle we for Beatrice; who even now
Is couched in woodbine coverture."

—*Much Ado*, iii. i.

In Milton, likewise, the nightingale,

"Sings darkling, and in shadiest covert hid."

—*Paradise Lost*, iii.

41, 3.—**The living airs . . . Died.** To indicate that all things seemed hushed to listen to the song.

41, 3.—**middle night.** Cf. note 15, 18.

41, 4.—**bulbul** (*bull' bull*). The Arabic name of a kind of thrush whose song is so much admired in the East that the bird is sometimes called the 'nightingale of the East.' Bryon and Moore introduced the word into English poetry.

"'Twas like the notes, half ecstasy, half pain,
The bulbul utters, ere her soul depart."

—*Moore, Lalla Rookh, Veiled Prophet*, I. xiv.

41, 5.—**Not he : but something.** This beautiful periphrasis is one of the loveliest images ever made of a bird's ecstatic song. The essence of the thought is in Wordsworth :—

“O euckoo ! shall I call thee Bird,
Or but a wandering Voice ?

.

And I can listen to thee yet ;
Can lie upon the plain
And listen, till I do beget
That golden time again.

O blessed bird ! the earth we pace
Again appears to be
An unsubstantial, faery place,
That is fit home for Thee ! ”

—*To the Cuckoo.*

“A song in mockery and despite
Of shades, and dews, and silent night,
And steady bliss, and all the loves
Now sleeping in the silent groves.”

—“*O Nightingale, Thou surely Art.*”

And in Shelley :—

Hail to thee, blithe spirit !
Bird thou never wert.

—*To a Skylark.*

41, 5.—**which possess'd . . . time.** The song filled and held the air of night ; it seemed to voice all the passions in a ceaseless but ever-changing song, pouring forth without restraint ; surely what sang was not of this earth but immortal, for as it sang time ceased to be.

41, 10.—**flattering.** Either ‘throwing lustre on,’ as in,

‘A splendid presence flattering the poor roofs.’

—*Aylmer's Field.*

this sense is Shaksperian, cf. Sonnet 33, 2 ; or ‘charming,’ as in,

“Music's golden tongue

Flattered to tears this aged man and poor.”

—Keats, *Eve of St. Agnes.*

41, 12.—**Black.** Originally this read ‘Blackgreen.’ The metrical effect of the change is forcible.

41, 12.—**grots.** A poetical abbreviation of 'grotto'; here, beautiful artificial caverns.

41, 18.—**counterchanged.** Lit., to cause to take a different or opposite place, to interchange, but used by Tennyson in the sense of 'diversify' or 'chequer.' So in

'Witch-elms that counterchange the floor
Of that flat lawn with dusk and bright.'

—*In Memoriam*, lxxxix.

41, 23.—**sphere.** 'The sky apparently vaulted.'

41, 24.—**Distinct with.** 'Clearly marked out to the eye by.'

41, 24.—**inlaid.** The original reading is 'unrayed.'

42, 4.—**as in sleep.** 'As though I were asleep.'

42, 9.—**drawn.** The original reading was 'borne.'

42, 10.—**pleasance.** Here 'pleasure.' So elsewhere in Tennyson :

'When my passion seeks
Pleasance in love-sighs.'

—*Lilian*.

Tennyson gets the archaic word from Spenser or Chaucer. (O. Fr. *plaisance*, connected with Lat. *placere*, to please.)

42, 11.—**A shadow-chequer'd lawn.** The same thought is in,

'A chequer-work work of beam and shade.'

—*In Memoriam*, lxxii.

42, 12.—**stilly sound.** Far off, so that the noise is dulled almost to stillness. Cf.

"The hum of either army stilly sounds."

—*Henry V.*, iv. *Prol.*

42, 13.—**myrrh-thickets.** The myrrh-shrub is a spiny shrub with scanty foliage, small green axillary flowers, and small oval fruits.

42, 13.—**blowing.** 'Blossoming.'

42, 14.—**tamarisks.** Low trees, having small scale-like leaves; also called flowering cypress. The Arabian species exudes a gum-like manna.

42, 15.—**rosaries.** 'Rose-gardens,' a Mid. English sense of the word, in accordance with its derivation, Lat. *rosarium*, a rose-garden.

42, 16.—**obelisks.** ‘A tapering shaft of rectangular plane, generally finished with a pyramidal apex.’ (Gk. *obeliskos*, a spit, or a pointed pillar.) They were set usually to record the triumphs of kings.

42, 21.—**alley’s latticed shade.** The ‘alley’ is a walk bordered with shrubs. (Fr. *allée*); the ‘latticed shade’ may be interpreted ‘the woven branches of the bowery walk’; but the poet may have had in memory the latticed walk in the *Arabian Nights*. See p. 201, *Source of the poem*.

42, 23.—**Pavilion.** Cf. *Source of the poem*, p. 201.

42, 23.—**Caliphat.** The Caliph is the successor and vice-regent of Mohammed. (Fr. *calife*, Arab. *khalifah*, successor.) The term is especially applied to the sovereigns of the Ominiad, Abbassid, and Ottoman dynasties and to the Sultan of Turkey. The ‘Caliphat(e)’ (*cal’if āt*) is the dominion of the caliph.

42, 24.—**cedarn doors.** ‘Cedarn’ was first used by Milton, formed like ‘golden,’ ‘wooden,’ etc.

‘West winds, with musky wing,
About the cedarn alleys fling.’

—*Comus*, 989.

43, 4.—**humour.** ‘Whim.’

43, 6.—**fourscore.** See p. 201.

43, 7.—**quintessence of flame.** Properly *kwīn tes’ens*. The accentuation is archaic, as in Shakspeare,

“The quint’essence of every sprite.”

—*As You Like It*, i. ii.

The fifth (L. *quintus*, fifth) essence; not of the four elements, earth, air, fire, water; hence above them, bright and incorruptible; hence, as here, the purest and most concentrated part of a thing.

43, 9.—**silvers.** A unique instance of the pl. word = ‘silver candlesticks.’

43, 9.—**look’d to shame.** Blazed with a light that overcame—and so abashed and put to shame—the darkness.

43, 10.—**hollow-vaulted dark.** Cf. 41, 23.

43, 11.—**the mooned domes.** The domes of the mosques,

crowned with the crescent, or new moon, symbol of Turkish dominion. Tennyson is involved, I fear, in an anachronism. The crescent is essentially a Mongol and Turkish, not an Arabian symbol. Its use by the Mongols cannot be traced earlier than on the Tartar banners of Jenghiz Khan (1162-1227) and the Turkish flags of the janissaries of the Sultan Orkhan (†1359).

43, 13.—**crescents . . . night.** The crescents on the mosques. lit up by the light from the pavilion, blaze bright against the dark background of vaulted sky.

43, 18.—**the Persian girl.** See p. 201.

43, 19.—**argent-lidded.** ‘Argent’ is a favourite poetical variation for ‘silver’ (Fr. *argent*, L. *argentum*, silver) or ‘white’; cf.

‘To yonder argent round’ (the moon).

St. Agnes’ Eve.

‘The polish’d argent of her breast.’

—*Dream of Fair Women.*

Apparently the poet makes the Persian girl rather fair, as he does Cleopatra in the line—but not the poem—just quoted.

43, 22.—**redolent ebony.** ‘Fragrant black hair.’

43, 24.—**zone.** ‘Girdle.’ (Gk. *zone*, girdle.)

44, 6.—**massive ore.** ‘Of massive gold’; cf. Milton,

“With wondrous art founded the massy ore.”

—*Paradise Lost.*

44, 8.—**diaper’d.** ‘Decorated with a pattern in which the figure is repeated over all the ground.’



THE POET.

The first publication. *The Poet* forms part of the little volume *Poems, chiefly Lyrical*, 1830 (see p. 201). The variant reading in the twelfth stanza is given from this first edition, according to Dr. Rolfe's collation.

Its literary value. The two poems, *The Poet* and *The Poet's Mind*, show Tennyson even in his early years fully conscious of the high mission of the art to which he was to devote his life. Of the two poems the latter vindicates the poet's mind against the shallow wit and cruel sneers of men who through cynical sophistry and sin have become incapable of appreciating its natural purity and melody. It is like a fountain,

‘It springs on a level of bowery lawn
And the mountain draws it from Heaven above,
And it sings a song of undying love ;
And yet, tho’ its voice be so clear and full
You never would hear it ; your ears are so dull ;
So keep where you are : you are foul with sin ;
It would shrink to the earth if you came in.’

The former poem makes clear the objective side of poetry—the power of the poet to influence the world, a power founded on his special gifts of sympathy, intuitive insight, and keen intellect. Thus his thoughts borne abroad with winged words among men call forth their thought and lend a power to their expression. Thus truth is multiplied, and men enlightened with wisdom attain a mighty and bloodless freedom. The Poet is therefore a gentle but irresistible intellectual power making for enlightened liberty. So Tennyson conceived his mission ; and to this high consecration of his art, throughout his long life, he was never untrue.

In a later poem, *The Poet's Song* (1842), he tells us of the

sublime charm of poetry, greater than that in the lark's or nightingale's song, for it shows forth the perfect future :

'For he sings of what the world will be
When the years have died away.'

The reviewer of the early volume in *The Westminster Review* of January, 1831, has best expressed the immediate appreciation this poem met with. "Mr. Tennyson . . . knows that 'the Poet's mind is holy ground' ; he knows that the poet's portion is to be

'Dower'd with the hate of hate, the scorn of scorn,
The love of love' ;

he has shown, in the lines from which we quote, his own just conception of the grandeur of a poet's destiny, and we look to him for its fulfilment. It is not for such men to sink into mere verse-makers for the amusement of themselves or others. They can influence the associations of unnumbered hearts ; they can disseminate principles ; they can give those principles power over men's imaginations ; they can excite in a good cause the sustained enthusiasm that is sure to conquer ; they can blast the laurels of the tyrants, and hallow the memories of the martyrs of patriotism ; they can act with a force, the extent of which it is difficult to estimate upon national feelings and character, and consequently upon national happiness. If our estimate of Mr. Tennyson be correct, he too is a poet, and many years hence may read his juvenile description of that character with the proud consciousness that it has become the description and history of his own work."

45, 4f.—**Dowered . . . love.** "That is, the Prophet of Truth receives for his dower the scorn of men in whose breasts scorn dwells, hatred from men who hate, while his reward is in the gratitude and affection of men who seek the truth which they love, more eagerly than the faults, which their acuteness can blame."—F. W. Robertson, quoted by Rolfe. But this is surely a wrong interpretation. The early stanzas treat alone

of the natural gifts of the poet; to introduce the world's treatment of him would be inconsistent with the obvious plan, just as the assumption that he is scorned and hated is inconsistent with the whole thought of the poem. The meaning therefore is, 'having received from nature the qualities that make him hate hatred, despise scorn, and love love.'

45, 6ff.—**He saw . . . lay.** 'The mysteries of life, death, good, evil, of his personal existence, he understood, and the wonderful designs of God were clear to him.' Cf. Milton's purpose in *Paradise Lost* to "justify the ways of God to men."

45, 10f.—**echoing feet . . . fame.** He knew the world thoroughly even in the highest walks of life, where only the famous few are permitted to tread. 'Echoing' is probably only an ornamental epithet, but may hint at the wonder with which his marvellous insight would be regarded by others.

45, 10.—**threaded.** The meaning is derived from that in 'to thread a needle'; hence the word here signifies 'to pass carefully through all the intricacies of the way.'

45, 12.—**viewless.** A Shaksperian word; cf.

"To be imprison'd in the viewless winds."

—*Measure for Measure*, iii. i. 124.

45, 14.—**Indian reeds blown.** The South-American Indians, the Dyaks of Borneo, etc., use the blowpipe, a long wooden tube, with a bore the size of the little finger, through which they blow small poisoned arrows made of split cane. The comparison will bear illustration from Longfellow's *The Arrow and the Song*. Its meaning is: "The power of utterance, vivid, penetrative, germinal, illuminative, carrying truth and giving wisdom."—Tainsh, p. 32.

45, 16.—**Calpe** (*cal' pē*). Calpe and Ab'yla are the two pillars of Hercules, the ancient names of two rocks which, it was said, Hercules tore apart to admit the ocean to the Mediterranean. Calpe is identified with Gibraltar, Abyla with Ceuta. They marked the western boundary of the known world, just as the Caucasus marked the eastern boundary.

46, 3.—**arrow-seeds.** The flower is the dandelion. Notice

the exquisite turn of the simile, to prepare for l. 4f., as well as the acute view of nature. Below (ll. 10, 11) the two thoughts in 'arrow-seed' are beautifully separated and expanded.

46, 8.—**A flower all gold.** So Lowell wrote,

"De'r common flower, that grow'st beside the way,
Fringing the dusty road with harmless gold."

—*To the Dandelion.*

46, 9.—**bravely.** 'Finely,' 'admirably.' This sense is archaic, but was common in Shakspeare's time.

46, 11.—**breathing.** 'Animated,' 'full of life and spirit.'

46, 13.—**gird their orbs with beams.** The figure is as of the moon reflecting the sun's rays. The poet's thoughts are taken into many minds and furnish them with a glorious but borrowed strength. Cf. Wordsworth's use of 'orb,'

"That mighty orb of song
The divine Milton."

—*The Excursion*, i.

46, 19.—**wreaths of floating dark upcurl'd.** "The breaking up of the darkness like mist or cloud" (Rolfe); but possibly 'wreaths of floating dark' is the poet's rhetoric for thin clouds fading away ('upcurl'd') at dawn. and so, figuratively, the ignorance of men dispelled by truth.

46, 20.—**Rare.** 'Uncommonly beautiful.' Cf.

"Divine and rare and precious."

—*Midsummer Night's Dream*, iii. ii.

47, 3.—**rites and forms.** Spiritual life tends to harden and formalize into rites and forms in which vitality gradually dies; new truths dawn on men with power to make them put aside the old husks and shells of truth.

47, 3.—**his burning eyes.** Sunrise, typifying truth. The imagery recalls Shelley,

"The sanguine sunrise, with his meteor eyes,
And his burning plumes outspread."

47, 5.—**There was no blood.** The bloody scenes of the French Revolution, where truth had not always enlightened freedom, were still fresh in many minds.

47, 9ff.—**And in her raiment's hem, etc.** This is the reading of the editions from 1842 on; but in the original edition it stood:—

‘And in the bordure of her robe was writ
Wisdom, a name to shake
Hoar anarchies, as with a thunder-fit,
And when she spake,’ etc.

47, 19.—**one poor poet.** Contrast with the first stanzas; compared with Freedom the poet indeed is little; but the change of epithets throws emphasis through the littleness of the being upon the terrific force of his word.

Pitched in a lower key, this thought is iterated (Tainsh) in the epilogue to *The Charge of the Heavy Brigade*.

‘And here the Singer for his Art
Not all in vain may plead,
‘The song that nerves a nation’s heart
Is in itself a deed’.



THE LADY OF SHALOTT.

First publication.—This poem, first published in 1832, is the earliest flower of Tennyson's interest in Arthurian poetry. Like so much of his work, it has been polished and revised until the present form of the poem is very different from the first. The variant readings of the earliest form are given from Dr. Rolfe's collation.

Its source.—Professor Palgrave asserts that the poem was suggested by "an Italian romance upon the Donna di Scalotta,—in which Camelot, unlike the Celtic tradition, was placed near the sea,"—*Lyrical Poems of Lord Tennyson*, p. 257. Churton Collins, *Illustrations of Tennyson*, p. 35, is unable to identify the romance, though possibly Novella lxxxi. of the collection *Libro di Novelle* (1804) is the one in question, as in it Camelot is near the sea. But the poem owes nothing to the novel.

The main point is that it is a lyrical treatment of the story of Lancelot and Elaine, daughter of Sir Bernard of Astolat, the same story which Tennyson twenty-seven years later was to work up on the basis of the eighteenth book of Malory into the idyll of *Elaine*.

Its meaning.—The whole poem is a play of the imagination; yet there is a current of real life beneath the mystical words of the poet. Alfred Ainger rightly says of this, "The key to this wonderful tale of magic, and yet of deep human significance, is to be found perhaps in the lines,

'Or when the moon was overhead,
Came two young lovers lately wed;
'I am half sick of shadows' said
The Lady of Shalott.'

The new-born love of something, for some one, in the wide world from which she has been so long excluded, takes her out of the region of shadows into that of realities. The curse is

the anguish of unrequited love. The shock of her disappointment kills her."

Its literary value.—It is a lyrical treatment of the story, so that much of its charm must consist in its subtle suggestiveness rather than in its clear narrative. The elusive charm of suggestion is everywhere in the poem, it breathes from the changing landscape, from the lonely isle, from its lonely lady, fairy-like, beautiful, and unhappy, from the gay song of Lancelot, from the mysterious fate that blights her, from her loveliness in death. No wonder Professor Rhys holds that the poem "perhaps surpasses everything else Tennyson has written in the weird fascination it exercises over the reader's mind, at any rate if he happens to be a Celt,"—*Studies*, etc.

48, 1.—**Shalott.** From 'Escalot,' a variant form of 'Astolat.' See note 1, 8. In Malory, Astolat is inland, and Elaine commanded that when dead she should be laid with her bed and richest clothes. "in a chariot unto the next (nearest) place where Thames is, and let me be put within a barge, and but one man with me...to steer me" (xviii. 19). In Malory likewise it is at Westminster that her barge is observed, not at Camelot. But, as we already saw, Tennyson shifts the Arthurian localities into the geography of the imagination.

PART I.

48, 3.—**either.** Cf. note 9, 18.

48, 5.—**wold.** 'Open undulating country.' (A. S. *weald*.)

48, 7.—**Camelot.** See note 1, 8.

48, 8ff.—**And up...runs for ever.** These seven lines were originally :

'The yellowleaved waterlily,
The greensheathed daffodilly,
Tremble in the water chilly,
Round about Shalott.

Willows whiten, aspens shiver,
The sunbeam-showers break and quiver
In the stream that runneth ever,' etc.

48, 12.—**willows whiten**, etc. The white underside of the leaf made visible when stirred by the breeze. The same phenomenon may be noticed with our maples. The aspen, or tremulous poplar (*populus tremula*), takes its scientific name from the peculiar readiness of its leaves to respond to the slightest breath of air, so that the “quivering aspen” is proverbial. “How exquisite is the word ‘whiten’ to describe the turning of the long willow-leaves in the wind, and how well it suggests the cool colouring of the whole picture, all in low tones, except the little spot of flowers below the square. gray castle.”—Van Dyke, p. 298.

48, 13.—**breezes dusk and shiver**. The water darkens through the ripples breaking the reflected light. Everyone who sails will appreciate this touch of description. ‘Dusk’ as a verb is very rare.

49, 1ff.—**By the margin**, etc. This and the following stanza read originally :

‘Underneath the bearded barley.
The reaper, reaping late and early.
Hears her ever chanting cheerly,
O’er the stream of Camelot.
Piling the sheaves in furrows airy.
Beneath the moon, the reaper weary
Listening whispers ; ‘tis the fairy
Lady of Shalott.’

The little isle is all inrailed
With a rose-fence, and overtrailed
With roses : by the marge unhailed
The shallop fitteth silkensailed.
Skimming down to Camelot.
A pearl-garland winds her head :
She leaneth on a velvet bed,
Full royally apparellèd
The Lady of Shalott.’

Mrs. Kemble regrets that the angel is discarded and that “a very canal-like image” is substituted for one, which, if minute and pretty rather than poetical, was at least fragrant and graceful to the imagination. (Mrs. Kemble’s criticisms are quoted by Rolfe, p. 197ff.)

49, 11.—**bearded.** Having stiff hairs on the ears of barley.

49, 12.—**cheerly.** An archaic form,—‘cheerily.’ Cf.

‘Cheerly rouse the slumbering morn.’

—Milton, *L’Allegro*.

PART II.

49, 20.—**There she weaves.** Originally the two first stanzas read:—

‘No time hath she to sport and play :
A charmèd web she weaves alway.
A curse is on her, if she stay
Her weaving, either night or day,
To look down to Camelot.
She knows not what the curse may be ;
Therefore she weaveth steadily,
Therefore no other care hath she,
The Lady of Shalott.
She lives with little joy or fear.
Over the water, running near,
The sheep-bell tinkles in her ear.
Before her hangs a mirror clear,
Reflecting towered Camelot.
And as the mazy web she whirls,
She sees the surly village-churls,’ etc.

49, 21.—**web.** In Malory and in *Lancelot and Elaine*, it is worth noting. Elaine weaves, *after* she had met Lancelot, a cover for his shield left in her charge.

50, 11.—**village-churls.** ‘Churl,’ a rustic, a labourer. (A. S. *ceorl*, a freeman of the lowest rank.) Cf.

“It was not made for village churls.”

—Scott, *Lay of the Last Minstrel*, Intr.

50, 15.—**pad.** ‘A horse for riding on the road.’ (The word is abbreviated from *pad-nag*, *pad-horse*, in which ‘pad’ is the same word as ‘path,’ of which it is a provincial form; cf. ‘roadster.’)

50, 23.—**still.** ‘Ever’; as frequently in Shakspere, *e.g.* “the still-vexed Bermoothes,” *Tempest*, i. ii.

51, 3.—**went to Camelot.** Original reading:

‘Came from Camelot.’

PART III.

51, 12.—**brazen greaves.** ‘Metal armour for the shins.’
(O. F. *greve*, shank, shin.) Cf.

“Around
His manly legs with silver buckles bound
The clasping greaves.”

—Pope, *Iliad*, xvi.

51, 13.—**Of bold Sir Lancelot.** See note 7, 1. “Horse and man, sunlight and scenery, gleaming river and glancing armour—how they fit together... The verse flashes and scintillates like the armour, like the eyes of Lancelot in the sunlight. The passage is perhaps almost over-sparkled,... but it is a wonderful piece of gold and jewel-work, and only Milton can excel it in its own sphere.”—Stopford Brooke, p. 118.

51, 14.—**red-cross knight.** The red-cross on a white mantle was the emblem borne by the Knights Templars. The cross is the emblem of Lancelot's devotion to the cause of Christian knighthood; the lady with the kneeling knight, of chivalry, in which devotion to women was supreme.

51, 16.—**yellow field.** Cf. l. 10 above.

51, 18.—**The gemmy bridle.** The adornment of the bridle was characteristic of wealthy cavaliers. The bells hung on it furnished Chaucer with the well-known picture of the Monk.

“And when he rode, men mighte his bridel here (hear)
Gingeling (jingling) in a whistling wind.”

—*Prologue to the Cant. Tales*, 101f.

51, 19.—**branch of stars.** A figure from an elaborate candelabrum, each arm of which is called a branch.

51, 20.—**Galaxy.** ‘The Milky Way.’ (Gk. *gala*, *galakt*-, milk.)

“Seen in the galaxy, that milky way,
Which nightly, as a circling zone, thou seest
Powder'd with stars.”

—Milton, *Paradise Lost*, vii.

51, 22.—**down to Camelot.** The first reading, here as in 52, 7 and 52, 16, was,

‘As he rode down from Camelot.’

51, 23.—**blazon'd baldric.** A belt or girdle richly ornamented, worn over the shoulder and passed under the opposite arm.

52, 3.—**All in the blue,** etc. This use of 'all in' constitutes a poetical phrase, introducing usually a scenic effect. Cf.

'All in an oriel on the summer side
Vine-clad, of Arthur's palace toward the stream
They met.'

—*Lancelot and Elaine.*

52, 10.—**Some bearded meteor.** A comet with a train or tail. Comets are actually classed by some as "bearded, tailed, and hairy." (Indeed the word 'comet' is Gk. *kometes*, having long hair.)

52, 11.—**over still Shallot.** The original reading was :

'Moves over green Shalott.'

52, 13.—**hooves.** A rare and archaic plural form.

52, 15.—**curls.** A distinctive mark of the knight as compared with the low-born.

52, 19.—**Tirra lirra.** The note as of a lark. Cf. Shakspeare,

"The lark that tirra-lirra chants."

—*Winter's Tale*, iv. ii. 9.

(The word is the O. Fr. *tirelire*, warble of the lark,—an imitative word.)

The original reading of this line was :

'Tirra lirra, tirra lirra.'

52, 23.—**the water-lily.** Originally : 'the waterflower.'

52, 27.—**three paces.** The mystic effect is heightened by the use of definite numbers. It is a device frequent in the Pre-Raphaelite school, cf.

"She had three lilies in her hand,
And the stars in her hair were seven."

—Rossetti, *The Blessed Damozel*.

PART IV.

53, 7.—**pale yellow woods.** Note the change of season, and the harmony of the background with the incidents throughout. Cf. note 8, 12,

53, 11ff.—**Down she came . . . wrote.** The original reading was :

‘Outside the isle a shallow boat
Beneath a willow lay afloat,
Below the carven stern she wrote,’ etc.

The following stanza then stood in the original .

‘A cloudwhite crown of pearl she dight.
All raimented in snowy white
That loosely flew (her zone in sight,
Clasped with one blinding diamond bright)
Her wide eyes fixed on Camelot,
Though the squally eastwind keenly
Blew, with folded arms serenely
By the water stood the queenly
Lady of Shalott.’

53, 15ff.—**And down the river . . . at the closing.** In the original :

‘With a steady stony glance—
Like some bold seer in a trance,
Beholding all his own mischance,
Mute, with a glassy countenance—
She looked down to Camelot.
It was the closing,’ etc.

53, 17.—**seeing . . . mischance.** Having the power to foresee evil, he in his prophetic trance is suddenly confronted with the vision of his own evil future.

54, 1ff.—**Lying, robed in snowy white, etc.** Originally this stood :

‘As when to sailors while they roam,
By creeks and outfalls far from home,
Rising and dropping with the foam,
From dying swans wild warblings come,
Blown shoreward; so to Camelot
Still as the boat head wound along
The willowy hills and fields among,
They heard her chanting her deathsong,
The Lady of Shalott.

54, 10ff.—**Heard a carol, etc.** The original reading was :

‘A longdrawn carol, mournful, holy,
She chanted loudly, chanted lowly,

Till her eyes were darkened wholly,
 And her smooth face sharpened slowly,
 Turned to towered Camelot.
 For ere she, etc.

Mrs. Kemble, who strangely thought that the changes in the poem are unfortunate, speaks finely here of the original reading of l. 4 of this stanza, praising the picturesqueness of the "statue-like fineness and rigidity which the features of the dead assume, lying for a while, both in form and colour, like their own monuments, finely wrought in fine material."

54, 19ff.—**Under tower**, etc. This stanza stood originally :

'Under tower and balcony
 By gardenwall and gallery
 A pale, pale corpse she floated by,
 Deadeold, between houses high,
 Dead into towered Camelot.
 Knight and burgher, lord and dame,
 To the plankèd wharfage came ;
 Below the stern they read her name,
 'The Lady of Shalott'.'

55, 5ff.—**Who is this**, etc. The original reading was :

'They crossed themselves, their stars they blest,
 Knight, minstrel, abbot, squire, and guest.
 There lay a parchment on her breast,
 That puzzled more than all the rest,
 The wellfed wits of Camelot.
 'The web was woven curiously,
 The charm is broken utterly,
 Draw near and fear not—this is I,
 The Lady of Shalott'.'

55, 8.—**crossed themselves**. To make a sign of the cross was held a protection from evil spirits, etc.



THE LOTOS-EATERS.

The first publication. Tennyson's little volume of 1832, containing, as we already saw, *The Lady of Shalott*, held also the earliest version of *The Lotos-Eaters*. In it, likewise, were *The Miller's Daughter*, *Ænone*, *The Palace of Art*, and *A Dream of Fair Women*; it is easy to see that the poet had here attained his distinct manner, his characteristic touch, while opening up at least two of his happiest veins of inspiration—the English Idyll and the Arthurian legend. Since this first publication, the poem has undergone many changes, which the notes, according to Dr. Rolfe's collation, chronicle.

Source of the poem. *The Lotos-Eaters*, as well as *Ænone*, shows that remarkable feature of Tennyson's genius already illustrated in *The Recollections*,—the power of seizing a bald situation or slender suggestion, and glorifying it with wonderful splendour of imagination and felicity of phrase. For *The Lotos-Eaters* he had Homer's very simple story of the Loto-phagi (Gk. *lotos*, *phago*, I eat), as told by Odysseus, king of Ithaca, to king Alcinous, *Odys.* ix. It is of course a traveller's story, a great fable created out of a little truth.

“On the tenth day,” said Odysseus, “we set foot on the land of the lotus-eaters, who eat a flowery food. So we stepped ashore and drew water, and straightway my company took their midday meal by the swift ships. Now, when we had tasted meat and drink, I sent forth certain of my company to go and make search what manner of men they were who here live upon the earth by bread, and I chose out two of my fellows, and sent a third with them as herald. Then straightway they went and mixed with the men of the lotus-eaters, and so it was that the lotus-eaters devised not death for our fellows, but gave them of the lotus to taste. Now, whosoever of them did eat the honey-sweet fruit of the lotus, had no more wish to bring tidings nor to come back, but there he

chose to abide with the lotus-eating men, ever feeding on the lotus, and forgetful of his homeward way. Therefore, I led them back to the ships weeping, and sore against their will, and dragged them beneath the benches, and bound them in the hollow barques. But I commanded the rest of my well-loved company to make speed and go on board the swift ships, lest haply any should eat of the lotus and be forgetful of returning. Right soon they embarked and sat upon the benches, and sitting orderly they smote the grey sea water with their oars."—tr. Butcher and Lang.

Not only is there this indebtedness to Homer, but woven into the texture of the poem, as Mr. Collins and Mr. Stedman have pointed out, are many beautiful thoughts from Theocritus, Bion, and Moschus. Parallel passages from these authors are quoted in the notes from Mr. Stedman's translations.

In the general manner of treatment, "its languid and dreamy beauty, its soft and luscious verse, its tone and sentiment," all these, says Mr. Collins, are to be found in the two fragments from the last mentioned Greek authors. But this tone was already in English poetry, in Spenser (cf. *F. Q.* ii. vi.), but more particularly in Thomson. An illustration from the latter is especially in point:—

"Was nought around but images of rest,
Sleep-soothing groves, and quiet lawns between,
And flowery beds that slumbrous influence kest (cast)
From poppies breathed and beds of pleasant green
Where never yet was creeping creature seen.
Meanwhile unnumbered glittering streamlets played,
And hurlèd everywhere their waters sheen ;
Thus, as they bickered through the sunny glade,
Though restless still themselves, a lulling murmur made.

* * * * *

And where this valley winded out, below,
The murmuring main was heard, and scarcely heard, to flow.

A pleasing land of drowsy-head it was,
Of dreams that wave before the half-shut eye ;
And of gay castles in the clouds that pass,
Forever flushing round a summer-sky," etc.

—Thomson, *Castle of Indolence*, i.

Before 1832, Tennyson had half caught the spell that seized upon Ulysses' mariners and the haunting melody of its metrical expression. The prelude to *The Lotos-Eaters* is *The Sea-Fairies*, which voices the weariness and futility of labour and the charm of rest and love. I quote only the opening lines; but listen to the rhythm of the second line, the sweetest of the new rhythms he was to introduce into English blank-verse.

'Slow sail'd the weary mariners and saw,
Betwixt the green brink and the running foam,
Sweet faces, rounded arms, and bosoms prest
To little harps of gold; and while they mused
Whispering to each other half in fear,
Shrill music reached them on the middle sea.

Whither away, whither away, whither away? fly no more.
Whither away from the high green field, and the happy
blossoming shore?

Day and night to the billow the fountain calls:
Down shower the gambolling waterfalls
From wandering over the lea:
Out of the live-green heart of the dells
They freshen the silvery-crimson shells,
And thick with white bells the clover-hill swells
High over the full-toned sea:
O hither, come hither and furl your sails,
Come hither to me and to me.'

Two years later, thought and rhythmical harmony were developed into *The Lotos-Eaters*.

Its literary value. *The Lotos-Eaters* is an artist's study of a mood. This mood has its antithesis in *Ulysses*, another work that owes its rise, in part at least, to classical suggestions. Just as Ulysses felt the *Weltgeist*, the passion to see and to know, his gray spirit

'yearning in desire
To follow knowledge like a sinking star';

so here the mariners of Ulysses, worn with wars and the weary seas and the bonds of discipline and duty, find all that suggests these things hateful. To forget the past with its hateful memories, the future with its duties, to slip away from all responsibility and from all effort, and to drain the cup of

present pleasure—rest,—that is life for them. How that rest creeps in upon the senses from river and cataract and forest and wind; it does not need the lotos to bring the sweet oblivious draught to steep their weary senses in forgetfulness.

The Lotos-Eaters is then a study of a mood, an artist's study, worked out with wonderful feeling for the effects of colour, smell, sound, and movement upon human emotions. For these, as we see in the passage quoted above, the poet had no suggestions from Homer; they are wholly the work of his invention, which creates to harmonize with his mood a land of drowsihead, itself drunk with the lotos,

'Thro' every hollow cave and alley lone
Round and round the spicy down the yellow Lotos-dust is blown.'

Textual changes. The changes from the text of 1832 to that of 1842 call for special comment. They are not merely verbal polishing; they give a distinctly different tone to the two versions. The later version, adding the part 'Dear is the memory,' etc. calling up the estrangement of the home affections that comes with absence, vastly strengthened the human element in the poem, which was before mainly a picture. Then in the final stanza the somewhat commonplace definiteness, leading nowhere, disappeared, giving place to the tragic and even sublime picture of the banquet of the gods (see 63, 1ff), and that too in just progress of thought. The eaters of the lotos had forgotten home and wives and duty, there could be only one greater quiescence, to despise humanity: they would be like the Gods careless of mankind and contemptuous of human life. When not only their life and labour, but all life is vain, all labour a mistake, we have the supreme height of pessimism, where in the earlier version we had only the philosophy of the Sybarite. Thus the poem closes, as we now have it, with the full note of tragic pathos. And we feel hanging over the lotos-eaters as they cease their song the very fate of the humanity they vainly endeavour to cast off, a fate which the gods, ever jealous of men, seem already to hold impending.

Its metrical structure.—The metrical character of the first part of the poem is a further link to Thomson and Spenser. In it the poet employs the well-known Spenserian stanza, with its iambic metre of eight lines pentameter followed by an Alexandrine line of six accents, the rimes being *ab ab bc bc c*. This stanza, admirable for calm narrative, is given up when the rapid changes of thought of the Choric Song break in.

56, 1.—**The Lotos.** The name Lotos (Lat. *lotus*, Gk. *lotos*) was applied by the ancients to many plants, not only those used for food but the beautiful water-lilies as of the Nile. The lotos of Homer is identified by Herodotus, iv. 177, with the North African plant, now known as *Zizyphus Lotus*, more usually called the Jujube. “It is a shrub two or three feet high, a native of Persia, the north of Africa, etc., and produces in great abundance a fruit about as large as a sloe, and with a large stone, but having a sweet farinaceous pulp, which the natives of some parts of Africa make into cakes resembling gingerbread. A kind of wine is sometimes made from it.”

Even in ancient times the lotos became, chiefly through Homer’s account, a symbol of pleasure, and was so regarded by Heraclitus. One thinks likewise of Kingsley’s association of the lotos of the Nile with Aphrodite (*Hypatia*, xv.).

56, 2.—**he.** Ulysses, see p. 226f.

56, 6f.—**swoon**, etc. The air lay heavy; what motion there was came like the deep sigh of a dreaming man.

56, 8.—**Full-faced above**, etc. The original reading was:

‘Above the valley burned the golden moon.’

56, 9.—**like a downward smoke.** Not only because of the motion, but the curling mist would be most wide-spread below.

56, 10.—**to fall and pause and fall.** Notice the fine suggestion of the meaning in the three cæsuras in this line:

‘Along the cliff to fall | and pause | and fall | did seem;’

while the vowel cadence and vowel length beautifully imitate the distant slumbrous roar.

56, 12.—**Slow-dropping veils**, etc. ‘Veils’ is appositive nominative to ‘some.’ In a letter to Mr. Dawson of Montreal, Tennyson wrote: ‘When I was about twenty or twenty-one I went on a tour to the Pyrenees. Lying among those mountains before a waterfall that comes down one thousand or twelve hundred feet, I sketched it (according to my custom then) in these words:

Slow-dropping veils of thinnest lawn.

When I printed this, a critic informed me that ‘lawn was the material used in theatres to imitate a waterfall, and graciously added Mr. T. should not go to the boards of a theatre but to nature herself for his suggestions.’ And I *had* gone to nature herself.

“I think it is a moot point whether—if I had known how that effect was produced on the stage—I should have ventured to publish the line.”

The lofty waterfall is that of the Cirque of Gavarnie, in the French Pyrenees.—Palgrave, p. 252.

One compares this image with that in the *Ode to Memory*,

‘The waterfall
Which ever sounds and shines
A pillar of white light upon the wall
Of purple cliffs, aloof descried.’

56, 12.—**lawn**. ‘The finest linen cambric.’

56, 13.—**wavering lights and shallows**. In contrast with the steady fall of the other cataracts, these streams rushed forth, broken into rapids chequered with ever changing light and shade.

56, 14.—**slumbrous**. The fall was afar off, so that its roar and surge seemed stilled as if held in slumber.

56, 17.—**Three silent pinnacles**. This stood originally:

‘Three thundercloven thrones of oldest snow.’

56, 17.—**aged snow**. The words suggest not only the

appearance but the height of these mountain-tops covered with perpetual snow.

57, 2.—**Up-clomb the shadowy pine**, etc. The dark pines could be seen ascending the mountain-side above the thickets; amidst them the cataracts fall, dashing them with spray.

57, 2.—**the woven copse**. 'Copse' is a reduced form of 'coppice,' a thicket of small trees or underwood. For the epithet 'woven,' cf. 39, 12.

57, 3.—**charmed sunset**. The lovely scene charmed the sun to linger on it.

57, 3.—**adown**. See note 38, 8.

57, 5.—**down**. 'High rolling open country.' (A.S. *dūn*, a hill.) It was yellow from the sunset.

57, 7.—**galingale**. 'Galingale' (*cyperus longus*) is 'a sedge having an aromatic tuberous root.' (The word is the oldest word of Chinese origin in English except perhaps 'silk.') In Theocritus, Idyl XIII., the Argonauts "cut them pointed flag-leaves and deep marsh-galingale." Palgrave says "the Papyrus species is here intended."

57, 9.—**keel**. Here, by synecdoche, 'vessel.' (It is worth noting that *cēol* in A. S. means 'ship,' not 'keel'; the latter meaning apparently is due the influence of the Norse, *kilir*, pl.)

57, 10.—**faces pale against**, etc. The lotos-eaters inhabiting the land descend to the ship with the sunset behind them.

57, 15.—**gushing of the waves...shores**. First came the dulling of the sense of hearing; the sea that broke upon the beach now appeared to moan on distant shores.

57, 18.—**thin as voices from the grave**. A classical notion was that the voices of the dead were thin. Homer represents the souls crying with the thin gibbering voices of bats disturbed.—*Odys.* xxiv. Theocritus wrote of Hylas "thin his voice came from the water, and hard by though he was, he seemed very far away."—*Idyl* XIII. So the ghosts in Virgil have a "thin voice," "*vocem exiguam*,"—*Æneid*, vi. 492; and in Horace, "mournful and thin,"—*Sat.* i. viii. Cf. Shakspeare, *Jul. Cæs.* ii. ii. 24.

57, 20.—**And music in his ears.** He heard the rhythmic beating of his heart; cf. 72. 12f. One notices this phenomenon when 'half-asleep.'

57, 21.—**Between the sun and moon.** "Sir H. Holland... expresses surprise that no writer in prose or verse had noticed the phenomenon of the sun and moon both at full above the horizon at the same time. But he must have overlooked these lines, which show that long ago Mr. Tennyson had seen and recorded this sight. Where he saw it admits of hardly a doubt—on the low dunes of the Lincolnshire coast, where at one time the red sun may be seen setting over the wide marsh, and the full moon rising out of the eastern sea."—*Macmillan's Mag.* xxix. 142.

58, 2.—**fields of barren foam.** The 'fields' of the sea is classical, but not the picturesque epithet in 'wandering fields.' Cf. "the liquid fields," Virgil, *Æneid*, vi. 724; 'fields of Neptune,' *id.* viii. 695; Homer, "unvintaged sea," *Il.*, i. The epithet 'wandering' is beautifully used in *In Memoriam*, vi.,

'His heavy-shotted hammock-shroud
Drops in his vast and wandering grave.'

Cf. Shakspeare.

"The envious flood
Stopt in my soul, and would not let it forth
To find the empty, vast, and wand'ring air."

—*Richard III.*, i. iv.

58, 4.—**our island home.** Ithaca is one of the smallest of the Ionian Islands. and lies seventeen miles west of the main land of Greece and two miles north of Cephalonia. It was the home of Ulysses and his companions, who had joined in the expedition that laid siege to Troy. On the fall of that city, Ulysses set sail for home, but was driven by storm first to Thrace. then across the Mediterranean to the coast of Libya, where he encountered the Lotophagi, as our poem narrates. These adventures, with his later experiences with Circe, the Sirens, and Calypso are related to king Alcinous, on the shores of whose kingdom Ulysses was cast. The later books of the

Odyssey narrate his final return home and his reunion with his wife Penelope.

CHORIC SONG.

58, 6.—**Choric Song.** A song sung by a body of singers. Usually the whole chorus sang each stanza, but frequently in the ancient choric songs, the singers were divided into two bands, singing alternate stanzas in the well-known *strophe* and *antistrophe*. Mr. Adam Carruthers has pointed out to me, and he is I believe the first to notice it, that it is a decided advantage in interpretation to regard this Choric Song as consisting of alternate choruses. The one body of singers, in parts I., III., V. and VII., voice the langour of the island, the charm of its music, of its scenery, of its vegetation, especially the lotos. In II., IV., VI., VIII., the second body answering sing the weariness of labour and wandering, freedom from the hateful memories of the past and the trammels of the future. and the final resolve to cease from toil and live at ease like the Gods. There is a shadow of evidence in favour of this in the closing line of the poem, when the singers cry :

‘O rest ye, brother mariners, we will not wander more.’

I.

58, 9.—**blown.** ‘Full-blown.’

58, 11.—**gleaming.** Not from “the particles of mica and quartz in the granite” (Rowe-Webb), but from the half-bright sky and its reflected light in the water, seen between the deep darkness of the shadowy granite walls.

58, 11.—**shadowy granite.** Cf. note 10, 11, ‘dim.’ ‘shadowy,’ as applied to Camelot.

58, 12f.—**Music, that gentlier,** etc. Cf. Moschus, ii. 3f.

“When Sleep that sweeter on the eyelids lies
Than honey, and doth fetter down the eyes
With gentle bond.”

and Theocritus, v. 51,

“The fleece of lambs, softer than downy Sleep.”

58, 14.—**tir'd**. Dr. Rolfe prints 'tired' in this line, as it is, he says, not monosyllabic, and it is contrary to Tennyson's custom to abbreviate verbs ending in *e*.

58, 15ff.—**Here are cool mosses deep**, etc. Cf. Theocritus, v. 45ff.

"Here are the oaks, and here the galingale,
The bees are sweetly humming near their hives;
Here are twin fountains of cool water...here the pine
From overhead casts down to us its cones."

58, 17.—**weep**. 'Droop down.'

58, 18.—**the poppy hangs in sleep**. The flower sacred to Demēter. Some species yield opium, others edible seeds; the smell of the flower is usually slightly narcotic.

II.

59, 2.—**the first**. 'The highest and best,' a sense of the numeral common to many languages.

59, 4.—**still**. Cf. note 50, 23.

59, 7.—**slumber's...balm**. Cf. Macbeth's lamentation,—

"The innocent sleep...
Balm of hurt minds."
—*Macbeth*, ii. i.

59, 10.—**roof and crown**. Since man is the consummation of the scheme of creation.

III.

59, 13.—**folded leaf**. 'The petal.'

59, 14.—**With**. 'By.' So earlier editions of 62, 2 read 'with.' This use of 'with' after the passive verb was more common in earlier English.

59, 15.—**care**. 'Forethought,' 'anxiety for the morrow'; cf. Matt. 6. 28ff.

59, 20.—**waxing**. 'Growing.' (A.S. *weaxan*, to grow.)

59, 25.—**Fast-rooted**. The whole round of its destiny is fulfilled there, in its place; then should the Mariners cease from wandering and be like the flower,

IV.

60, 2f.—**Hateful is the dark blue sky**, etc. From Virgil (Collins); “Heaven’s vault is weariness to look upon,”—*Æneid*, iv. 451.

Stanza IV. has many suggestions of Moschus, v. 4ff.

When the gray deep has sounded, and the sea
Climbs up in foam and far the loud waves roar,
I seek for land and trees, and flee the brine,
And earth to me is welcome: the dark wood
Delights me, where, although the great wind blow,
The pine-tree sings. An evil life indeed
The fisherman’s, whose vessel is his home,
The sea his toil, the fish his wandering prey.
But sweet to me to sleep beneath the plane
Thick-leaved; and near me I would love to hear
The bubble of the spring, that murmuring
Disturbs him not, but is the woodman’s joy.

60, 3.—**Vaulted**. Cf. 43, 10 and 13.

60, 4f.—**Death is the end...be?** Cf. 1 Cor. 15. 32.

60, 9.—**all things are taken....Past**. So in Lucretius (Rowe-Webb): Short is this enjoyment for poor weak men, presently it will all be over, and never after may it be called back.”—*De Rerum Nat.*, iii. 914. The past is ‘dreadful,’ as swallowing up all that they would like to hold but which inexorable fate snatches away.

60, 10.—**Portions and parcels**. A poetical variation of “part and parcel,” in which ‘parcel’ shows its original force, ‘a small part’ (M. L. *particella* from L. dim. *particula*).

60, 13.—**climbing up the climbing wave**. ‘Toiling with the oar over waves that mount with the ship.’ The periphrasis suggest the monotony of the rower’s work. Mr. Collins thinks this echoes Virgil’s “conscendi navibus æquor,” *Æneid*, i. 381, which he renders, “I climbed up the sea.” There is a parallel, as he points out, in Shakspeare:

“And let the labouring barque climb hills of seas.”

—*Othello*, ii. i.

V.

60, 21.—**amber light.** Cf. 57, 1ff.

60, 22.—**myrrh-bush.** See note 42, 13, and cf. 57, 3.

61, 1.—**crisping ripples.** See note 16, 18.

61, 4.—**mild-minded melancholy.** The first trace of this phrase is in a sonnet, which Tennyson suppressed after its publication in *The Englishman's Magazine*, 1831,

‘Speak low, and give up wholly
The spirit to mild-minded Melancholy.’

61, 8.—**white dust. . . urn of brass.** The ashes of the dead collected from the funeral pyre were placed in beautiful vases of gold, marble or clay (cinerary urns) and preserved in the family mausoleum. See *Odys.* xxiv. But this was with the rich; the poor were buried (cf. 61, 6f.).

VI.

61, 10f.—**Dear is the memory,** etc. This stanza was added in the version of 1842. See p. 228.

61, 13.—**Now our . . hearths are cold.** Cf. note 58, 4. The pathos of this line is very great. Around the hearth and home were gathered the strongest and most sacred memories and the dearest ties of social life; all these were blotted out with the dissolution of their homes, signified by the extinction of the hearth-fire.

61, 14.—**inherit us.** ‘Succeed to our possessions.’

61, 15.—**like ghosts,** etc. Cf. *Macbeth*, iii. iv., Banquo’s ghost appearing to the feasters.

61, 16.—**island princes.** Rulers of the Ionian islands around Ithaca; see note 58, 4, and cf. *Odys.* i.

61, 17.—**the minstrel sings before them.** Thus the old epic poetry was rendered; cf. *Odys.*, i., *Bēowulf*, l. 868ff. “It was his duty,” says Gladstone of the bard of the heroic age, “to descant upon the freshest and most interesting subjects: and the events at Troy were reckoned to have pre-eminent attractions, even at the distant court of Alkinoos, before Odusseus had reached his island home.—*Homer*, p. 9.

61, 18.—**war in Troy.** The siege and sack of Troy from which they were returning. Its object had been to avenge Menelaus, whose wife Helen had been carried off by Paris, son of king Priam of Troy.

61, 22.—**hard to reconcile.** They were being blown over the seas at the will of the Gods; it seemed hard to propitiate them.

62, 3.—**pilot-stars.** Fixed stars, such as the North Star, by which the sailors could steer.

VII.

62, 5.—**But, propt,** etc. The original reading was: 'Or propt on lavish beds.' Cf. Theocritus, v. 31ff.

"More sweetly will you sing
Propt underneath the olive, in these groves.
Here are cool waters plashing down," etc.

62, 5.—**amaranth.** An imaginary flower supposed never to fade. (Gk. *a-marantos*, not-fading.) So Milton addresses it, "Immortal amarant," etc. *Paradise Lost*, iii., 353.

62, 5.—**moly** (*mō'li*). A fabulous herb with black root and milk-white flower. Hermes gave the plant to Ulysses to free him from the spell of Circe's draught (*Odys.* x.). (Gk. *molū*, moly.) Cf. Milton, *Comus*, 636.

62, 8.—**heaven dark and holy.** "Shaded with clouds and wrapt in a religious calm" (Rowe-Webb); but it is strange they should wish a clouded sky when they love the 'warm airs,' 62, 6. The dreamers may depict the joy of lying at night under the mountain pines (57, 2), with the sea 'far off.' The 'heaven dark and holy' is then the darkness of the sky and hush of nature at night. This offers the desired contrast with 62, 3, and is supported by 'the dewy echoes'; "bright river" and 'sparkling brine' are in harmony with the conception of a moonlit night. Cf.

"The balmy moon of blessed Israel
Floods all the deep-blue gloom with beams divine."

—*Dream of Fair Women.*

Still, on the whole, I prefer a closer connection with v., referring 'dark and holy' to the 'dark-blue' sky (60, 2), which even in daylight is almost black, seen from a mountain-height.

62, 11.—**dewy echoes.** The echoes from the mountain-caves, among the dewy underwoods and spray-dashed vines.

62, 13.—**To watch.** The original reading was: 'to hear.'

62, 13.—**emerald.** 'Bright green.'

62, 14.—**acanthus-wreath divine.** Acanthus is the name among the Greeks and Romans for the bear's-breech or brankursine; a tall shrub with beautiful spiny leaves, much admired by the ancients, who used the leaves in their architectural designs. (Gk. *akanthos*, from *akantha*, a spine.) The 'wreath' is poetically the thick interlacing foliage; it is 'divine,' because supremely beautiful.

VIII.

62, 18.—**barren.** This originally read 'flowery.'

62, 21.—**alley.** Cf. 42, 21.

62, 22.—**spicy.** 'Fragrant.'

"Led by new stars, and borne by spicy gales."

—Pope, *Windsor Forest*.

62, 22.—**Lotos-dust.** 'The pollen of the Lotos flowers.'

63, 1ff.—**We have had enough, etc.** Notice the sudden change of the rhythm. The iambic measure with its calm movement gives place to a swinging trochaic metre of seven or eight accents. till, when the bitterness of despair and the moment of resolution are past, they return (64, 5f) to the calm iambic of content.

The original has been greatly changed from this point on. The effect of the changes is noticed, p. 228. The original reading was:

'We have had enough of motion,
Weariness and wild alarm,
Tossing on the tossing ocean,
Where the tuskèd seahorse walloweth
In a stripe of grassgreen calm,
At noon tide beneath the lea;
And the monstrous narwhale swalloweth
His foamfountains in the sea.
Long enough the winedark wave our weary bark did carry

This is lovelier and sweeter,
 Men of Ithaca, this is meeter,
 In the hollow rosy vale to tarry.
 Like a dreamy Lotos-eater, a delirious Lotos-eater !
 We will eat the Lotos, sweet
 As the yellow honeycomb,
 In the valley some, and some
 On the ancient heights divine ;
 And no more roam,
 On the loud hoar foam,
 To the melancholy home
 At the limit of the brine,
 The little Isle of Ithaca, beneath the day's decline.
 We'll lift no more the shattered oar,
 No more unfurl the straining sail ;
 With the blissful Lotos-eaters pale
 We will abide in the golden vale
 Of the Lotos-land, till the Lotos fail ;
 We will not wander more.
 Hark ! how sweet the horned ewes bleat
 On the solitary steeps,
 And the merry lizard leaps,
 And the foamwhite waters pour ;
 And the dark pine weeps,
 And the lithe vine ereeps,
 And the heavy melon sleeps
 On the level of the shore :
 Oh ! islanders of Ithaca, we will not wander more.
 Surely, surely slumber is sweeter than toil, the shore
 - Than labour in the ocean, and rowing with the oar.
 Oh ! islanders of Ithaca, we will return no more.'

63, 2.—**starbord**. The right hand side of the ship as one faces the bow. (A.S. *stēorbord*, *stēor*, rudder, *bord*, side.)

63, 2.—**larbord**. The left-hand side as one faces the bow. (Mid. E. *laddebord*, the side for lading the vessel.)

63, 3.—**wallowing monster**. 'The whale.'

63, 4.—**equal**. 'Undisturbed,' 'unchanging.' The phrase 'equal mind' is classical ; cf. Horace,

"Æquam memento rebus in arduis
 Servare mentem."

—*Odes*, ii. iii. 1.

63, 5.—**the hollow Lotos-land**. Cf. 56, 8 ; 57, 4.

63, 6.—**like the Gods...careless of mankind.** The conception of the gods and their attitude to mankind is that of Epicurus and his school, and was immediately suggested by Lucretius, *De Rerum Nat.* iii. 15ff. (Collins). But a closer parallel to the picture here is furnished by Goethe, *Iphigenie auf Tauris*, iv. (Bayne):

“Sie aber, sie bleiben	But they, they remain
In ewigen Festen	In everlasting feastings
An goldenen Tischen.	At golden tables.
Sie schreiten vom Berge	They stride from mountain
Zu Berge hinüber :	To mountain across ;
Aus Schlünden der Tiefe	While out of the abysses of the deep
Dampft ihnen der Athem	Steams up to them the breath
Erstickter Titanen,	Of strangled Titans,
Gleich Opfergerüchen.	Like the smoke of sacrifices,
Ein leichtes Gewölke.”	A light cloud.

Substitute *men* for *Titans* and we have Tennyson's conception.

63, 7.—**nectar.** The fabled drink of the gods, served to them by the cup-bearers, Hebe and Ganymede.

63, 7.—**bolts.** Zeus wielded the thunderbolt.

63, 9.—**golden houses...gleaming world.** The palace of Zeus was fabled to be on the summit of Mount Olympus in Thessaly; the epithet ‘golden’ is commonly used with the possessions of the gods, though the effect of sunlight on the mountain-tops may here be intended; around the palace spread the sunny and starry heavens.

63, 11.—**roaring deeps and fiery sands.** The perils of the deep and of the desert.

63, 13.—**centred.** ‘Consisting essentially.’

63, 15.—**a tale of little meaning.** This is Macbeth's cry.

“Life's but a walking shadow...it is a tale
Told by an idiot, full of sound and fury,
Signifying nothing.”

—*Macbeth*, v. v.

The ‘ancient tale’ here is the complaints of mankind, rising to the gods from the earliest ages, which, though uttered in bitter words, affect them no more than an idle tale.

63, 18.—little dues. 'Scanty returns.'

64, 2.—Suffer endless anguish. The tortures of Tantalus, Sisyphus, Ixion, etc., are here alluded to.

64, 2.—Elysian valleys. Elysium or the Elysian fields represented paradise to the Greeks. Amidst its groves and on its meadows set with asphodel, wandered the blessed dead, the heroes who died in battle, the noble poets, the benefactors of humanity.

64, 3.—asphodel. The white asphodel, a sort of lily, with a pale blossom. It grows freely in waste places, such as burial-grounds, and so was associated with death and the shades.



THE DAY-DREAM.

First publication. The part of *The Day-Dream* entitled *The Sleeping Beauty* appeared first in 1832. Expanded it re-appeared in its present form in the second volume of the 1842 edition of Tennyson's poems. Verbal alterations from this edition are noticed among the notes.

Its source. The inner story of *The Day-Dream* is of course the well-known fairy tale of the Sleeping Beauty. The notion of the resumption of life after ages of sleep pervades all literatures from the Norse story of Brynhild to the Greek of Endymion. Tennyson's version is most nearly associated with the *Belle au Bois dormant* ('Beauty in the Sleeping Wood') and Grimm's *Dornröschen* ('Little Briar-rose'). But in Perrault the king and queen were not brought under the influence of the fairy's spell; no bones of unsuccessful suitors lay bleaching in the close; the princess awakes the moment the prince kneels down; and the mother-in-law plays after the marriage a very wicked role. In Grimm the details of the story are almost exactly as Tennyson narrates, and he alone gives the picture of the instantaneous arrest and resumption of life, which is so admirably repeated by the poet. We must therefore look to Tennyson's knowledge of the German version to account for the story as here told.

Some suggestions of the framework and setting of the story may lie in the lines of the poet Rogers (1763-1855), entitled *The Sleeping Beauty*, beginning:

"Sleep on, and dream of Heaven awhile—
Tho' shut so close thy laughing eyes,
Thy rosy lips still wear a smile
And move, and breathe delicious sighs!
Ah, now soft blushes tinge her cheeks
And mantle o'er her neck of snow.
Ah, now she murmurs, now she speaks
What most I wish—and fear to know!"

Its literary value. The poem is one of many early efforts to depict not the passion but the 'grace, perfume and delight of the springtime of love.' It is not so successful as *The Gardener's Daughter*, or *The Miller's Daughter*, because it lacks the lovely setting of English scenery and the tender idyllic sweetness of those poems. It is more formal, more artificial, there is a touch of stiff English fashion in it: Lady Flora and her Macaw embroidery and a young man trying to tell her he loves her by means of a nursery tale! Yet the situation is more than redeemed by the sprightly vigour of the tale, never better told, by the airy grace and gay sportiveness united with truth and earnestness in the lover; so that while the poem belongs to the *vers de société*, rather than the literature of life, it is highly successful in its own sphere.

PROLOGUE.

65, 5.—**damask.** The pink colour of a damask rose (the *rosa damascena*, a native of Damascus). The sense in 39, 11 is due to the fabric originally made in Damascus.

65, 7.—**lattice.** 'The lattice window.' The various suggestions in this picture are made to recall the fairy-tale—the sleeping beauty, the mansion, the woods behind, the lover, etc.

65, 9.—**behind.** That is 'behind me.'

65, 10.—**summer crisp,** etc. 'Summer landscape wavy with foliage.' See note 16, 18.

65, 13.—**reflex.** The memory, copying the old legend as the reflected image copies the original. Cf.

"Like the reflex of the moon
Seen in a wave."

—Shelley, *Prometheus Unbound*, iii. 4.

65, 18.—**Macaw.** (*ma kaw'*). An American parrot, having a long tail and magnificent plumage, sometimes brilliant with crimson and blue. Here the embroidered design of a macaw.

65, 22.—**order'd.** 'In metrical order.'

THE SLEEPING PALACE.

I.

66, 5.—**Here.** In the castle of the Sleeping Beauty.

The poet takes for granted the earlier incidents: the feast of the king, the good wishes poured upon his daughter by the fairies; the curse uttered, however, by one fairy, resenting a fancied slight, that the princess should prick herself on a spindle and fall dead; the changing of this curse into a hundred years' sleep by another; the banishment of spindles, but the preservation of one in an old tower, by which the fate comes upon the princess; her falling into a sleep that spreads over castle and court and kitchen and stable and dove-cot.

II.

66, 12.—**range of urns.** Cf. 49, 19. A frequent feature in old formal gardens. An excellent example still is the lawn at Windsor Castle.

66, 14f.—**fountain...withdrawn.** It ceases to flow in the middle of the lake.

66, 18.—**laurel.** The laurel is common among English garden shrubberies.

III.

67, 2.—**martins.** See note 23, 5.

67, 6.—**Not even of a gnat.** This picture of silence may be compared with that in *Mariana*.

'The blue fly sung in the pane,' etc.

IV.

67, 11.—**Butler.** In old times, the servant in charge of the wine-cellar.

67, 13.—**steward.** The servant charged with keeping accounts, collecting rents, making payments for household expenses.

67, 14.—**maid-of-honour.** A woman of good birth in attendance on a queen or princess.

V.

67, 20.—**summers.** See note 4, 18.

67, 21.—**Oriel.** See note 34, 6.

67, 22.—**prisms.** The cut-glass ware served by its angular edges as prisms to decompose the light into primary colours.

67, 22.—**carven.** The strong past part. of 'carve,' a strong verb that has become weak, leaving however this archaic participle. Cf.

'Garlanded with carven imageries.'

—Keat's *Eve of St. Agnes*, xxiv.

67, 23.—**beaker.** 'A large drinking vessel with a wide mouth.' (Possibly derived ultimately from Gk. *bikos*, drinking-bowl.)

VI.

68, 8.—**woodbine.** 'Honeysuckle.' (Its name is interesting; A. S. *wudubinde*,—*wudu*, wood, tree, *bindan*, bind,—since it winds about trees.)

VII.

68, 17.—**And newer knowledge**, etc. Cf. 78, 12ff. This creed of Tennyson's pervades his poetry through all his life.

68, 21.—**Care and Pleasure**, etc. That is, Life awakening to feel the emotions of life.

THE SLEEPING BEAUTY.

I.

69, 3ff.—**unto her feet. .hair has grown.** The hair has a growth somewhat independent of human life; but the detail is here simply for picturesque effect. It is not in the prose tales.

69, 5.—**purple.** This read first, 'purpled.'

69, 9.—**slumbrous.** 'Conducive to slumber'; cf. 56, 14 and note.

II.

69, 12.—**coverlid.** The same word as 'coverlet' (69, 5), 'uppermost covering of a bed.' (O. Fr. *couvre lit*, cover bed.)

69, 18.—inform. 'Give a forming quality to,' 'animate.'
Cf.

"Inform thy thoughts with nobleness."

—Shakspeare, *Coriolanus*, v. iii.

"In some fair body thus th' informing soul."

—Pope, *Essay on Criticism*.

III.

70, 3.—far apart. The meaning is clear from 72. 11.

THE ARRIVAL.

I.

71, 3f.—all precious things, etc. Constancy of purpose in seeking will be at last rewarded by the attainment of the highest objects of the search; for when destiny decrees that worth (worthy beauty) *may* become known, love completes the work of fate by claiming the object of his affection.

71, 5—in sequel. 'Following the course of fate.' (L. *sequor*, I follow.) Love follows and consummates the action of fate.

II.

71, 12.—The bodies, etc. "Princes from time to time came and tried to penetrate the hedge into the castle. But all their efforts were in vain, for the thorns, as if they had hands, held together, and the youths were left hanging in them, could not get free, and died a miserable death."—Grimm.

71, 14.—thorny close. The 'close' is the enclosed precincts of the castle (Fr. *clos*, L. *clausum*, enclosed.) It is 'thorny' from the forest of thorns that has sprung up (68, 6).

71, 15.—on. The earliest reading is, 'in.'

III.

72, 6.—For all his life, etc. Tennyson adds this charming touch to the story. Love had been a magic presence, full of vague sweet promises.

IV.

72, 12.—**Magic Music.** Magic music is a game in which one of a company seeks for a hidden article guided by the sound of music played slow or fast as he goes away from or approaches the hiding place.

‘A pleasant game, she thought, she liked it more
Than magic music, forfeits, all the rest.’

—*The Princess*, Prol.

The prince hears the beating of his heart (cf. 57, 20) telling him he is ever nearing the object of his search.

72, 15.—**flutters like a lark.** See Appendix, Wordsworth’s *To a Sky-Lark*.

72, 16.—**on his knee.** So in Perrault: “il se mit à genoux auprès d’elle”; but in Grimm: “er bückte sich,” he stooped.

THE REVIVAL.

III.

74, 2.—**last with these.** Early editions read, ‘last of all.’

74, 5.—**by holy rood.** ‘By the holy cross’; a common oath in olden times. (A. S. *rōd*, cross.)

IV.

74, 11.—**Pardy** (*par'de*). An interjection, once used freely as a mild oath. (O. Fr. *pardie*, *par Dieu*, by God.) It is one of Spenser’s archaisms (cf. *Faerie Queen*, ii. vi. 22).

74, 12.—**somewhat.** The early readings are ‘something.’

74, 15.—**the chancellor.** The King’s Chancellor (as the Lord Chancellor of England to-day), the highest judicial officer of the crown, keeper of the Royal Seal, etc. His insignia of office embrace an elaborate gold chain passing from his shoulder over his breast; cf. ‘dallied...chain,’ l. 17 below.

74, 18.—**put the question by.** The chancellor was aware of the real situation, the king was not; the courtier is deferential yet clever in escaping the difficulty of the king’s question.

THE DEPARTURE.

I.

75, 6.—that new world, etc. New as glorified with love, but this glory has illumined it since the Garden of Eden.

75, 9.—into the dying day. 'Westward.'

II.

75, 15.—this and this. 'This kiss and this.'

75, 16.—a sliding star. Cf. 20, 8 and note.

III.

76, 7.—the crescent-bark. 'The new moon'; cf. Wordsworth,

"Until I have a little boat
For shape just like the crescent moon."

—*Peter Bell*, Prol.

MORAL.

77, 1.—Moral. 'The application of the story to human life.' Perrault closes his tale with versified 'Moralité,' which may have suggested l. 71, 3ff.

"Que souvent de l'Hymen les agréables nœuds,
Pour être différés n'en sont pas moins heureux,
Et qu'on ne perd rien pour attendre."

The lover still fights shy of an avowal, fearing the girl's mind; this brings him to the *envoi*, where he must make personal application of his poem.

L'ENVOI.

I.

78, 1.—l'*envoi* (*lawno waw'*). The *envoi* in a poem is a postscript or 'send-off' (Fr. *envoyer*, to send), indicating usually the person to whom the poem is particularly addressed, and offering the poet's homage.

78, 5.—**Well—were it not.** The lover still hesitates, giving an evasive reason for the story.

78, 13.—**the stars.** That is, 'and of the stars.'

78, 16.—**the Poet-forms.** The realizations of those nobler times which the poets have dreamt of.

78, 19.—**Titanic.** 'Enormous,' 'gigantic.' (Gk. *Titan*, one of the race of old deities, warring against Zeus, who cast them into Tartarus. They are fabled as gigantic beings able to pile mountain on mountain, and no doubt personified forces of nature.)

79, 1.—**We are Ancients.** Adapted from Bacon's remark: "Antiquitas sæculi juvenus mundi. These times are the ancient times, when the world is ancient, and not those which we account ancient *ordine retrogrado*, by a computation backward from ourselves."—*Advancement of Learning*, i. Bartlett quotes Whewell, *Phil. Induct. Sciences*, ii. 198, to the effect that this thought is likewise in Giordano Bruno's *Cena di Cenere* (1584). Cf. 2 Esdras, 14. 10.

II.

79, 5.—**decads** (*dek'ad*). Here 'a period of ten successive years,' in which sense the spelling 'decade' is usual.

79, 6.—**quinquenniad.** 'A period of five years.' (L. *quinque*, five, *annus*, year, and nom. suffix. *ad*.)

79, 7.—**quintessence.** Cf. 37, 7 and note.

IV.

80, 10f.—**Which all too dearly,** etc. Not yet loving another, she is too sweetly occupied with herself; as yet the depths of her nature have not been moved by love for her suitor.

80, 12ff.—**A sleep by kisses,** etc. The quiet of her nature, not yet broken by the kiss of love, keeps her from knowing all that life has to offer her ('the moral') in love and wifedom.

EPILOGUE.

81, 7ff.—**To shape the song,** etc. 'To make a story that is merely an airy beautiful nothing, apart from real life (ll 8-9),

or an elaborate old-time unpractical romance of love (ll. 10-11),—I did it but to please you whom I love; but, however fanciful it be, there is earnest beneath its jest, and both are,' etc.

81, 8.—**birds of Paradise.** A name of many species of birds, found chiefly in New Guinea and famous for the magnificence of their plumage. They were once fabled to be without feet and to remain always on the wing.

81, 11.—**by Cupid-boys.** The name of Cupid, the Roman God of Love, represented as a boy carrying bow and arrows, was used in art, decoration, etc., to designate figures of children,—in this case children in fantastic dresses who had in Court ceremonies to carry the ladies' trains.



MORTE D'ARTHUR.

First publication. The *Morte d'Arthur* (see p. 124) first appeared as part of *The Epic*. The setting of the poem in *The Epic* was made by imagining a gathering at Francis Allen's, on a Christmas Eve, when the parson Holmes, the poet Everard Hall, the host, and the narrator sat talking round the wassail-bowl. After Holmes had harped on the general decay of faith, the conversation turned to Hall's poems ;

‘You know, said Frank, he burnt
His epic, his King Arthur, some twelve books—...
God knows : he has a mint of reasons ; ask.
It pleased *me* well enough.’ ‘Nay, nay,’ said Hall,
‘Why take the style of those heroic times ?
For nature brings not back the Mastodon,
Nor we those times ; and why should any man
Remodel models ? these twelve books of mine
Were faint Homeric echoes, nothing-worth,
Mere chaff and draff, much better burnt.’ ‘But I,’
Said Francis, ‘pick’d the eleventh from this hearth
And have it : keep a thing, its use will come.
I hoard it as a sugar-plum for Holmes.’...
He brought it ; and the poet little urged,
But with some prelude of disparagement,
Read, mouthing out his hollow oes and aes,
Deep-chested music, and to this result.’

When the *Morte d'Arthur* was read, the parson woke up to grunt ‘Good,’ but the other hearers sat for some time rapt ; then to bed, where the the narrator dreams of Arthur's return as ‘a modern gentleman of stateliest port.’

Though not published till 1842, the poem had reached completion in 1837. Landor writes on December 9th of that year : ‘Yesterday a Mr. Moreton, a young man of rare judgment, read to me a manuscript by Mr. Tennyson, very different in style from his printed poems. The subject is the death of

Arthur. It is more Homeric than any poem of our time, and rivals some of the noblest parts of the *Odyssey*."—Forster, *Life of Landor*, ii. 323.

Twenty-seven years after publication, when the *Idylls* were well nigh complete, the *Morte d'Arthur* was taken out of its charming personal setting, which could not be made harmonious with the series of epic-idylls, and expanded into *The Passing of Arthur*. These expansions, made at a time when the possible allegorizing of the Arthurian story was uppermost in the poet's mind, are in the main directed to strengthen the spiritual drift of the story, and represent the struggle of the Soul with despair of its mission in life, and its farewell as it enters once more into 'the great deep.'

Its source. The *Morte d'Arthur* like *The Holy Grail* rests upon Malory's *Morte Darthur*; more particularly it is founded upon chapters four and five of the twenty-first book, of which the poem is, as we shall see, a close poetic rendering.

Its literary value. The poem has exercised a great charm over its readers since its publication. Its great theme, the passing away of a hero-king, mortally wounded by a traitorous knight, on a battle-field among the wild mountains; the mysterious departure, god-like, yet fraught with the deepest pathos of imminent death; the vivid picture of Bedivere gazing after the lessening barge: all these are a noble theme, which leaves us too revolving many memories, in the silent exaltation of mind arising from the contemplation of scenes of noble thought and heroic action.

The style too is wonderfully clear, simple, and strong with its brief English words, and yet with a mournful melody, and with some of the finest onomatopœic effects in the language.

"Not only in the language," says Bayne, "is it Homeric, but in the design and manner of treatment. The concentration of the interest on the hero, the absence of all modernism in the way of love-story or passion-painting, the martial clearness, terseness, brevity of the narrative with definite

specification, at the same time, are exquisitely true to the Homeric pattern," p. 334. This, however, is exquisitely unfair to Malory; for in this early sketch Tennyson's treatment of his source is far nearer the original than the ornate versions in the subsequent *Idylls*, and every point that gives the poem its 'Homeric' character is exquisitely true of the poet's original. Illustrations of this will appear in our comparisons. Brimley (p. 243) speaks more nearly the truth: "They are rather Virgilian than Homeric echoes; elaborate and stately, not *naïve* and eager to tell their story; rich in pictorial detail; carefully studied; conscious of their own art; more anxious for beauty of workmanship than interest of action."

And in allegory, which we had to stop and struggle with in *The Holy Grail*—where can it be found in this picture of the last days of a human hero. "No allegory, no ethics, no rational soul, no preaching symbolism, enter here, to dim, confuse, or spoil the story. Nothing is added which does not justly exalt the tale, and what is added is chiefly a greater fulness and breadth of humanity, a more lovely and supreme nature, arranged at every point to enhance into keener life the human feelings of Arthur and his knight, to lift the ultimate hour of sorrow and of death into nobility."—Stopford Brooke, p. 387.

82, 1.—**Morte d'Arthur.** French, 'death of Arthur.' (*Mort* is the purer French form.)

82, 2.—**So.** Suggesting a description as already given in the epic poem of which the present is a supposed fragment.

82, 3.—**Among the mountains, etc.** In Malory the battle was assigned "upon a down besides Salisbury, and not far from the sea side, and this day was assigned on a Monday after Trinity Sunday" (xxi. 3). In Geoffrey, it is by the river Cambula, in Cornwall.

In Tennyson, the scenic background is made to harmonize with the closing of Arthur's life; see notes 8, 12; 16, 2.

82, 3.—**Arthur's table.** See note 2, 11.

82, 4.—**by.** 'After.'

82, 5.—**Lyonnesse.** Supposed to have been a tract of country between Land's End and the Scilly Isles. It apparently formed part of Cornwall, for Tristram of Liönes in Malory is spoken of as a Cornish knight (ix. 15). It was submerged later, it was said, and lies "full forty fathoms under water," or as Tennyson says,

'A land of old upheaven from the abyss,
By fire, to sink into the abyss again.'

82, 7.—**The bold Sir Bedivere.** In *The Coming of Arthur* we learn that Bedivere was,

'the first of all the knights
Knighted by Arthur at his crowning...
For bold in heart and act and word was he,
Whenever slander breathed against the king.'

The epithet 'bold,' as in 83, 21; 83, 22, etc., is a permanent epithet with Bedivere's name, independent of his state at any given moment, and indicates his characteristic virtue. It was so in Malory.

Permanent epithets are frequent in Homer; "fleet-footed Achilles," "ægis-bearing Zeus," "wide-ruling Agamemnon," "swift ships," "unvintaged sea," etc.; they are also characteristic of the oldest English epic poetry: "Hrothgar, helmet of the Scyldings," "ringed ships," etc.

82, 8.—**Sir Bedivere, the last.** In the *Idyll* this line is omitted, constituting the only change made in the *Morte d'Arthur*.

In Malory two knights are left, Sir Lucan, Arthur's butler, and his brother, Sir Bedivere, both of them sore wounded. The two weakly led the wounded king to "a little chapel not far from the sea." Attempting again to carry the king Lucan dies. The passage in Tennyson, "Then spake King Arthur," etc. (82, 14 to 83, 17) is added by the poet.

82, 10.—**chancel.** The part of the church railed in (L. *cancelli*, cross-bars) to contain the choir and altar.

82, 11.—**strait.** 'A narrow passage of land,' 'an isthmus.'—a Tennysonian sense developed from the word as applied to water, and as meaning a narrow pass. Cf.

"Honour travels in a strait so narrow
Where one but goes abreast."

—Shakspeare, *Toilus and Cressida*, iii. iii. 151.

82, 13.—**a great water.** Mr. Brimley defends the phrase against probable charges of being an affected phraseology for 'a great lake'; "it marks," he says "the appearance of a large lake outspread and taken in at one glance from a high ground." The truth is, 'water' is still in use in the north for 'lake,' cf. Derwentwater; and was frequently used in Mid. Eng. for 'river' or 'sea.' The advantage of the synonym is its indefiniteness, suggesting the expanse of water stretching away to undefined distance. Tennyson, no doubt, learnt the word from Malory, and used it likewise for its archaic character. Cf. "The king...saw afore him in a great water a little ship," etc.—Malory, iv. 6.

82, 15.—**The sequel of to-day.** 'The issue and result of to-day's events.' Cf. 71, 5.

82, 17.—**Such a sleep.** Cf. Collins,

"How sleep the brave that sink to rest," etc.

83, 4.—**I perish by this people.** The pathos of this is given an additional touch in the passage prefixed in *The Passing of Arthur*,

'Ill doom is mine
To war against my people and my knights.
The king who fights his people fights himself.
And they my knights, who loved me once, the stroke
That strikes them dead is as my death to me.'

Arthur had made his people when he

'Drew all their petty principedoms under him,
Their king and head, and made a realm and reigned.'

—*The Coming of Arthur.*

83, 5f.—**Merlin sware...rule once more.** For Merlin, see note 8, 1. Henry of Huntingdon (1139) chronicles the common British belief that Arthur did not die but that the Britons

'solemnly expect his return.' Geoffrey of Monmouth also: "Arthur himself was mortally wounded, and being thence carried to the isle of Avallon to be cured of his wounds" (xi. 2). Wace (l. 13681 ff.) wrote, "Arthur, if the story lies not, was mortally wounded in the body; he had himself borne to Avalon to heal his wounds. There he is still, the Britons await him, as they say and understand... Merlin said of Arthur that his end would be doubtful. The prophet spoke truth, and one can doubt, and always will doubt, whether he is dead or living." So too Layamon (B. l. 23052ff), tr. Madden: "Of this king's death will no Briton believe it, except it be at the last day, at the great doom,... for he himself said to his good Britons... that he would fare into Avalon, into the island, to Argante, the fair; for she should with balm heal his wounds; and when he were all whole he would soon come again to them here." In Malory his tomb is inscribed: "Hic jacet Arthurus Rex quondam Rexque futurus" (xxi. 7). Cf.

'On Caer-Eryri's highest found the King,
A naked babe, of whom the Prophet spake,
'He passes to the Isle Avilion,
He passes and is heal'd and cannot die'.

—Gareth and Lynette.

The 'sleep' of Arthur associates the British story with the similar stories of Charlemagne and Friedrich Barbarossa in Germany, Brian in Ireland, Bobadil el Chieo in Spain, etc.

83, 9.—**Excalibur**. See note 11, 11.

83, 13.—**samite**. See note 21, 23.

83, 18.—**But now delay not**, etc. In Malory, as Sir Lucan dies, the king says, "But my time hieth fast. Therefore take thou Excalibur, my good sword, and go with it to yonder water side, and when thou comest there, I charge thee throw my sword in that water, and come again, and tell me what thou there seest. My lord, said Bedevere, your commandment shall be done, and lightly bring you word again" (xxi. 5).

83, 19.—**middle mere**. See notes 15, 18; 11, 10.

83, 20.—**lightly**. 'Nimble,' 'actively,' and so 'quickly'; so used in Malory and Spenser.

83, 22.—**meet.** 'Fitting'; cf. Luke 15. 32. (Mid. Eng. *mete*, A.S. *gemet*, fit or suitable, connected with *metan*, to measure.)

83, 25.—**hest.** 'Command.' (A.S. *hæs*, command.)

84, 1ff.—**from the ruined shrine**, etc. "With what distinctness, with what force and conciseness of language, is the whole scene of the churchyard, with its associations, brought before the mind: its ancestral relics, the ruins of the chapel, the piercing cold of the night-wind edged with sea-salt, the sharp rocks down which the path to the sea descends."—Brimley, p. 243f.

84, 2.—**Athwart.** See 31, 5.

84, 4.—**the sea-wind sang**, etc. Notice the purposed rendering of the meaning by means of the sound of the lines; the wind sang '*shrill, chill*, with *flakes of foam*'; the knight descending by '*zig-zag paths*, and *juts of pointed rock*,' in which the stop-consonants indicate the nature of the way, down to the beach, saw before him stretching away, gleaming under the full moon, '*the shining levels of the lake*,' where the open consonants depict the level waters.

84, 7.—**the shining level.** Cf. L. *æquora*; but here the phrase arises from Bedivere seeing the lake from the low margin, not as before from the crags.

84, 8.—**There drew he forth**, etc. "So Bedivere departed, and by the way he beheld that noble sword, that the pommel and haft were all of precious stones, and then he said to himself, If I throw this rich sword in the water, thereof shall never come good, but harm and loss. And then Sir Bedivere hid Excalibur under a tree. And as soon as he might he came again unto the king, and said he had been at the water, and had thrown the sword into the water. What sawest thou there? said the king. Sir, he said, I saw nothing but waves and winds. That is untruly said of thee, said the king; therefore go thou lightly again, and do my command as thou art to me lief and dear, spare not, but throw it in" (xxi. 5).

84, 11.—**keen with frost.** 'Clear because of the frosty air.'

84, 12.—**diamond sparks.** Until 1853 this read ‘diamond studs.’

84, 13.—**topaz lights.** ‘Gleams from the facets of the jewels.’ The topaz (*tō’ paz*) is a precious stone, usually colourless, but at times yellow, white, green, or pale-blue in colour.

84, 13.—**jacinth work.** ‘Embossed with jacinths,’ that is with hyacinths. The hyacinth among the ancients was a gem of bluish-violet colour, supposed to be the sapphire; to-day the name is applied to a reddish-orange gem. (*Jacinth* is only a form of *iacinth*, which is O. Fr. *hyacinthe*, from L. *hyacinthus*, Gk. *uakinthos*, hyacinth (plant) or sapphire (gem).)

84, 14.—**subtlest.** ‘Elaborately and skilfully wrought.’

84, 16.—**This way and that dividing**, etc. He reviews and considers, rapidly turning his mind to all different courses of action. The sentence is rendered from the Latin,

“Atque animum nunc huc celerem, nunc dividit illuc.”

—Virgil, *Aeneid*, iv. 285, viii. 20.

“And he divides the swift mind, now this way, now that.”

84, 17.—**in act to throw.** ‘On the point of,’ ‘in the very process of.’ The construction is imitated from the Lat. *in actu*. Pope is among the first to use it, as in

“Atrides then his massy lance prepares

In act to throw, but first prefers his prayers.”

—*Iliad*, iii.

84, 19.—**many-knotted waterflags.** The waterflag or yellow flag or iris or fleur-de-luce, for it has all these names, grows in shallows or by the margin, blossoming on a stem sometimes three feet high, amidst its green sword-blade leaves. The epithet ‘many-knotted’ is difficult to explain. The possible explanations would refer the description to (1) the root-stock of the flag which shows additional bulbs from year to year; (2) the joints in the flower stalks of which some half-dozen may be found on each stalk; (3) the large seed-pods that terminate the stalks, a very noticeable feature when the plant is sere; (4) the various bunches or knots of iris in a bed of the

plants, so that the whole phrase suggests a thickly matted bed of flags. I favour the last interpretation, though Tennyson's fondness of technical accuracy in his references makes the second more than possible.

81, 20.—**marge.** See note 42, 18.

81, 21.—**So strode he back slow.** Notice the heaping up of consonants, rendering necessary the slow movement of the line.

85, 2f.—**the ripple washing,** etc. Notice the accuracy of the description of the sounds of water, "the two phrases marking exactly the difference of sound produced by water swelling up against a permeable or impermeable barrier,"—Brimley p. 241 f. Cf. 86, 23f, and the original suggestion in Malory (note 85, 14) "the waters wap (beat) and the waves wan (? moan).

85, 5.—**thy nature and thy name.** 'Thy disposition and thy name of knight' (cf. Malory, "thou art named a noble knight.") Sir Bedivere we can see from *The Coming of Arthur* was valiant and sincere, taking the plain practical honest view of life, and ready to fight to his utmost for it. His practical though narrow nature seems revealed throughout this poem. Tennyson may have some reference in this line to the name 'Bedivere,' as if connected with *L. verus*, true.

85, 6.—**fealty.** 'Fidelity to a lord,' usually assured in a feudal system by an oath. (O. Fr. *fealte*, L. *fidelitas*.)

85, 12.—**lief.** 'Beloved,' an archaic word. (A.S. *lēof*, dear; connected with *lufu*, love, etc.)

85, 14ff.—**Then went Sir Bedivere,** etc. "Then Sir Bedivere returned again, and took the sword in his hand, and him thought (it seemed to him) sin and shame to throw away that noble sword, and returned again, and told to the king that he had been at the water, and done his commandment. What saw thou there? said the king. Sir, said he, I saw nothing but the waters wap and the waves wan. Ah traitor, untrue, said king Arthur, now hast thou betrayed me twice. Who would have wend (supposed) that thou that hast been so lief

and dear, and thou art named a noble knight, and would betray me for the riches of the sword. But now go again lightly, for thy long tarrying putteth me in great jeopardy of my life, for I have taken cold. And but if thou do now as I bid thee, if ever I may see thee, I shall slay thee with mine own hands, for thou wouldest for my rich sword see me dead " (xxi. 5).

85, 16.—**Counting the dewy pebbles.** It is often noticed that when in deep thought the mind seeks some trifling occupation of a mechanical nature, which seems to aid abstraction.

85, 18.—**chased.** 'Engraved.'

85, 22.—**Should.** 'Should' not 'would,' to indicate the inevitable consequence of the act.

86, 1.—**bond of rule.** 'The bond that makes government possible.'

86, 6.—**empty breath...doubt.** Mere talk and tradition about Arthur and his deeds, which lacking material proof, would pass into myth and fable.

86, 11.—**maiden of the Lake.** See note 15, 21, p. 167. In some romances she is called Vivien, but Tennyson keeps apart the Ciree-like Vivien, who wrought Merlin's ruin, and that good power that supported Arthur, the Lady of the Lake.

86, 17.—**conceit.** 'Over-estimation of his own powers of mind' (Cent. Dict.); but rightly 'conception,' 'notion' (Rowe-Webb),—and that a false one, preventing him seeing the truth.

86, 19.—**And so strode back.** Cf 84, 21; the repetition of characteristic phrases has been noted as Homeric.

87, 4.—**Authority forgets a dying king.** A noble line, which Mr. Brimley calls "thoroughly Shaksperian." Of the passage he says: "The personification assists the imagination without distressing the understanding, as when dwelt upon, and expanded in detail; deepening the impressiveness of the sentiment by giving along with a true thought a grand picture—just such a passing flash of impassioned rhetoric as would become the highest oratory."—p. 215.

It has been suggested that the line is made from a passage

in Lingard, vi. 316, when speaking to the dying Elizabeth "Cecil intimated that she must go to bed... 'Must!' she exclaimed; 'is *must* a word to be addressed to princes? Little man, little man... thou hast grown presumptuous because thou knowest that I shall die.'"

87, 5.—**Laid widow'd**, etc. 'Hopelessly bereft.'

87, 8.—**offices**. 'The services it was the duty of the knights to tender.' (L. *officium*, duty.)

87, 11.—**giddy**. 'Light,' 'frivolous,' 'foolish'; cf. Shakspeare's

'Man is a giddy thing.'

—*Much Ado*, v. iv.

87, 14.—**spare**. 'Omit,' 'refrain from.'

87, 16.—**Then quickly rose**, etc. "Then Sir Bedivere departed, and went to the sword and lightly took it up, and went to the water side, and then he bound the girdle about the hilts, and then he threw the sword as far into the water as he might, and there came an arm and an hand above the water, and met it, and caught it, and so shook it thrice and brandished, and then vanished away the hand with the sword into the water. So Sir Bedivere came again to the king, and told him what he saw. Alas, said the king, help me hence, for I dread me I have tarried over long. Then Sir Bedivere took the king upon his back, and so went with him to that water side" (xxi. 5).

87, 20ff.—**Made lightnings**, etc. "A series of brilliant effects is hit off in these two words, 'made lightnings.' 'Whirl'd in an arch,' is a splendid instance of sound answering to sense...; the additional syllable which breaks the measure and necessitates an increased rapidity of utterance, seeming to express to the ear the rush of the sword up its parabolic curve. And with what lavish richness of presentative power are the boreal aurora, the collision, the crash, and the thunder of the meeting icebergs brought before the eye." —Brimley, p. 245.

87, 22.—**northern morn**. 'The aurora borealis,' brightest in the extreme north.

87, 23.—**isles of winter shock.** 'Icebergs crash together.'

87, 26.—**he.** The same personal affection appears here that leads men to give names to their weapons, their ships, etc.

87, 26.—**dipt the surface.** 'Went under the surface,' an unusual sense.

88, 5.—**thicker breath.** The breathing grows more difficult as death draws near.

88, 6.—**Now see I by thine eyes.** Cf. 30, 3,

'A welfare in thine eye reproves.'

"How dramatic and striking is King Arthur's sudden exclamation."—Brimley, p. 245.

88, 13.—**miracle.** Cf. 'wonder,' 85, 17.

88, 23.—**wound hath taken cold.** See note 85, 14; 90, 1; 'been exposed to the cold air. and so contracted a greater inflammation.'

89, 2.—**Slowly, with pain, etc.** Notice the effect of the *cæsuras*.

89, 3f.—**looking wistfully . . As in a picture.** The distant fixed gaze of the dying is here beautifully caught. The expression is from Æschylus, *Agamemnon*, l. 230ff. "Each of her sacrificers, she smote with a piteous glance, standing out conspicuous as in a picture." Cf.

'So like a painted battle the war stood
Silenced.'

—*The Coming of Arthur.*

89, 5.—**Remorsefully.** Cf. 11, 19 and note.

89, 11.—**nightmare.** An incubus, a monster conceived as oppressing sleepers. (A. S. *mære*, hence *not* connected with *nearh*, horse, steed, Mod. E. *mare*.)

89, 16.—**Clothed with his breath.** His breath steamed about him like a cloak, in the chill winter air. So King Arthur in the mists at Almesbury:

'The moony vapour rolling round the King,
Who seem'd the phantom of a Giant in it,
Enwound him fold by fold, and made him gray
And grayer, till himself became as mist
Before her moving to his doom.'

—*Guinevere.*

89, 18.—**a cry.** See 90, 7. The throwing in of Excalibur had been the warning of the King's fate to the three Queens.

89, 19.—**His own thought.** Remorse for disobedience, and fear of its evil consequence.

89, 20.—**Dry clash'd.** 'Dry' is here 'sharply,' 'distinctly,' 'clearly ringing'; cf. 'Dry sang the tackle.' 104, 13. This sense is adopted from the classics; as in, 'Their helms rang dry (*αὐρον*) and their bossy shields. being smitten with mighty stones,"—*Il.* xii. 160f., etc.

The passage 89, 20-26 merits the most careful study for the suggestions of meaning by metrical means, and should be compared with 84, 4-7 and note. Mr. Brimley (p. 346) says of it: "Do we not seem to burst from the narrow steep path down the ravine, whose tall precipitous sides hide the sky and the broad landscape from sight, and come out in a moment upon

'The level lake

And the long glories of the winter moon'?"

89, 26.—**long glories.** The moon was full (82, 13) and low in the sky, the reflection was therefore a long lane of fire.

90, 1ff.—**there hove a dusky barge,** etc. "And when they were at the water side, even fast by the bank hove a little barge, with many fair ladies in it, and among them all was a queen, and all they had black hoods, and all they wept and shrieked when they saw king Arthur. Now put me into the barge, said the king: and so he did softly. And there received him three queens with great mourning, and so they set him down, and in one of their laps king Arthur laid his head, and then that queen said, Ah, dear brother, why have ye tarried so long from me? Alas, this wound on your head hath caught over much cold. And so they rowed from the land; and Sir Bedivere beheld all those ladies go from him. Then Sir Bedivere cried, Ah, my lord Arthur, what shall become of me now ye go from me, and leave me here alone among mine enemies. Comfort thyself, said the king, and do as well as thou mayst, for in me is no trust for to trust in. For I will into the

vale of Avilion, to heal me of my grievous wound. And if thou hear never more of me, pray for my soul. But ever the queens and the ladies wept and shrieked, that it was pity to hear. And as soon as Sir Bedivere had lost the sight of the barge, he wept and wailed, and so took to the forest."—Malory, xxi. 5.

"He would be a bold critic who should pronounce that Tennyson has improved this... Tennyson's elaborate beauties command our admiration. Malory's simple words go straight to the heart."—Collins, p. 156f.

90, 1.—**hove**. For 'hove in sight.'

90, 3.—**ware**. See note 17, 21.

90, 5.—**Black-stoled**. Dressed in long black robes. (Gk. *stole*, a long robe.)

90, 6.—**Three Queens**. Tennyson in *The Coming of Arthur* allegorized the three queens; see note 15, 21. Malory goes on from the chapter just quoted to mention them by name:—"That one was king Arthur's sister, Morgan le Fay; the other was the queen of Northgalis (Wales); the third was the queen of the Waste Lands. Also there was Nimue, the chief Lady of the lake" (xxi. 6). Not wishing to break the mystery of Arthur's passing, Tennyson says nothing of this, or of the queens taking him to be buried, or of Bedivere coming upon a chapel in which was his new-made grave, though "the hermit knew not in certain that he was verily the body of king Arthur."

90, 7.—**shiver'd**. 'Went vibrating' (with grief); a poetical sense. 'Shiver' meaning 'vibrate' is found likewise in,

'Consonant chords that shiver to one note.'

—*The Princess*, iii.

90, 7.—**to the tingling stars**. 'Till the stars heard it and thrilled with pain.' Mr. Brimley defends the exaggeration: "The cry comes from a company of spirits, amid mountains whose natural powers of echo is heightened by the silence of night, the clearness of the winter air, and the hardening effect of frost," p. 246.

90, 10f.—**where no one comes**, etc. “The shrillness of the wind could not be greater in an uninhabited place...but the mournfulness of the feeling man would experience in such a place, is blended with the naturally sad wail.”—Brimley, p. 246.

90, 22.—**the springing east**. ‘The rising sun.’ The use of ‘spring’ with the sunrise is in Anglo-Saxon.

90, 23.—**greaves**. See note 51, 12.

90, 23.—**cuisse**s. ‘Armour for the thighs.’ (Fr. *cuisse*, thigh.)

90, 23f.—**drops of onset**. ‘Blood.’ Cf. *The Princess*, v. 157.

‘Though dashed with death,
He reddens what he kisses.’

90, 24.—**light and lustrous curls**, etc. Cf. the description of Arthur, in *The Last Tournament* :—

‘That victor of the Pagan throned in hall,
His hair, a sun that rayed from off a brow
Like hill-snow high in heaven, the steel-blue eyes,
The golden beard that clothed his lips with light.

And in *The Coming of Arthur*,

‘This king is fair
Beyond the race of Britons and of men.’

91, 2.—**the knightly growth**, etc. “Virgil’s good taste would have preserved him from such extravagances as ‘the knightly growth,’ etc. for a moustache.”—Collins, p. 11.

91, 5.—**a star of tournament**. In later poems Tennyson revised this conception of Arthur,

‘For Lancelot was the first in Tournament
But Arthur mightiest on the battle-field.’

—*Gareth and Lynette*.

See also *Lancelot and Elaine*, 311ff.

91, 6.—**Shot**. Like ‘a star.’

91, 10.—**my forehead and my eyes**. Epic definiteness for ‘face.’

91, 12.—**a noble chance**. See 14, 7.

91, 14.—**the light that led**, etc. Cf. 91, 5 and 19, 14, note.

91, 16.—the whole Round Table, etc. See note 2, 11.

91, 22.—The old order changeth, etc. This is the dominant note in the poem. Rome had yielded to Arthur in Britain; now the king must give up Excalibur for other hands to wield, must pass away from earthly sovereignty, yielding place to other instruments of God's ruling providence.

‘Our little systems have their day;
They have their day and cease to be:
They are but broken lights of thee,
And thou, O Lord, art more than they.’
—*In Memoriam*, Introd.

“Sir Bedivere hears the king give his last message to the world. It is the modern Christian who speaks, but the phrases do not sound out of harmony with that which might be in Romance.”—Stopford Brooke, p. 390. .

91, 25.—What comfort is in me. ‘As a king bereft of people and mortally wounded, how can I help thee.’

92, 2.—May he within Himself, etc. “May God accept my work and, absorbing it, as it were, into himself, purify it.”—Rowe-Webb. I think however that Arthur prays that, as he has done his work as an instrument of God, it should now be cleared of faults and enter into the divine plan whereby

‘God fulfils himself in many ways.’

92, 6.—Rise like a fountain. This thought is iterated in,

‘Prayer...

Like fountains of sweet water in the sea.’

—*Enoch Arden*.

92, 8.—a blind life. ‘A life acting without intelligence.’

92, 11.—every way. ‘On all sides.’

92, 12.—earth...Bound by gold chains. This beautiful thought is not Tennyson's. A rough suggestion lies in Homer, *Il.* viii.: “Fasten ye a rope of gold from heaven... yet could ye not drag Zeus from heaven to earth...but were I minded to draw with all my heart, then should I draw you up with very earth and sea withal...and so should all those things be hung in air.” Chaucer has “the fayre cheyne of love,” *Knight's Tale*, 2133; Bacon, “the highest link of

nature's chain must needs be tied to the foot of Jupiter's chair," *Adv. of Learning*, i. In Milton the world is attached to the universe by a golden chain,

"And fast by, hanging in a golden chain
This pendent world."

—*Paradise Lost*, ii.

So Ben Jonson, Dryden, etc. But Tennyson's immediate source is Archdeacon Hare's sermon on *The Law of Self-Sacrifice*: "This is the golden chain of love, whereby the whole creation is bound to the throne of the Creator."

92, 15.—**clouded with a doubt.** This represents not so much Tennyson's doubt of the future life, as Arthur's own vague doubt of Avalon, having only Merlin's prophecy for warrant.

92, 16.—**Avilion.** In Celtic mythology, the earthy paradise was a green island of the blest, far away beneath the setting sun. There lived the great heroes like Arthur, in the midst of an orchard of magic apples (*avlán*) within the sound of the waters of a mystic fountain. The Middle Ages attempted to localize Avalon on the river Brue or Bret in Somersetshire (see notes 3, 10; 3, 20), a place famous for its fairies and Druids.

While an 'island' in the river it would lie in the valley of the stream; hence 'island-valley.' Malory speaks of it now as the "isle" and again as the "vale" of "Avelion," "Avelon," "Avilion."

The very latest theory makes Avalon not originally the island of apples (Welsh *aval*, apple) but the isle of king Avallon, who may be regarded as a Celtic divinity associated with darkness and death.—Rhys, *Studies*, etc.

92, 17.—**Where falls not hail, etc.** This is almost literally the Middle Age conception of Avalon. It resembles somewhat that of the Elysium, note 61, 2; *Odys.*, vi. 42ff. Compare, too, *Lucretius*,

'The Gods, who haunt
The lucid interspace of world and world,
Where never creeps a cloud, or moves a wind,
Nor falls the least white star of snow,' etc,

92, 19.—**deep-meadow'd**. Cf. 'deep lawns,' 16, 17. It is from Gk. βαθιζέμενος, in Homer, *Il.* ix. 151 (Rowe-Webb).

92, 19.—**happy**. 'Luxuriant,' 'blooming'; cf. 'smiling' in
 "To scatter plenty o'er a smiling land."

—Gray, *Elegy*.

And Virgil's "lætæ segetes" happy harvest.

92, 20.—**Crown'd with summer sea**. 'Sloping down to the rippling sea, the waters of which like a crystal coronet circle at the horizon.' So Homer, "The island crowned about with the circle of the endless sea," *Odys.*, x. 195; Tennyson, "the marriage ring of the land," *Maud*, iv., etc.

92, 23ff.—**like some full-breasted swan**, etc. The myth of the sweet song of the swan before death is frequently found among the classical writers, who made the bird sacred to Apollo; so Pliny, *Nat. Hist.* p. 23: "Swans, shortly before their death, sing most sweetly"; cf. Shakspeare, *Merchant of Venice*, iii. ii. 44, and Tennyson's poem *The Dying Swan*.

The swan is not musical, but its rare low notes are said to resemble "the tones of a violin, though somewhat higher" (Nicol).

92, 24.—**fluting**. 'Singing softly with flute-like notes.'

92, 25.—**ruffles**, etc. The swan often half raises his wings in swimming; cf. Wordsworth's picture of the bird,—

"Fashioned his neck into a goodly curve;
 An arch thrown back between luxuriant wings
 Of whitest garniture."

—Dion.

92, 25.—**pure cold**. 'Snowy white.' Wordsworth compares the swan's plumage to

"A flaky weight of winter's purest snows."

—Dion.

92, 25.—**plume**. 'Feathers,' especially of the wings.

92, 26.—**swarthy webs**. 'Black webbed feet.'

93, 1.—**revolving many memories**. This phrase is the Latin "multa animo revolvens," revolving many things in his mind.

93, 14.—The lusty bird, etc. So in Shakspeare,—

“Some say, that ever 'gainst that season comes
Wherein our Saviour's birth was celebrated,
This bird of dawning singeth all night long.”

—*Hamlet*, i. i. 158f.

93, 20.—looming. A picturesque word, ‘appearing indistinctly, as rising above the horizon or clouded by mist.’

93, 21.—point after point. Cf. 105, 22.

93, 25.—Arthur, like a modern gentleman. “Arthur as the modern gentleman, as the modern ruler of men, such a ruler as one of our Indian heroes on the frontier, is the main thing in Tennyson's mind. and his conception of such a man contains his ethical lesson to his countrymen.”—Stopford Brooke, p. 377.



THE BROOK.

First publication. The volume containing *Maud*, published in 1855, contained likewise this charming idyll, for such was its sub-title in the early editions. The poem has scarcely been changed since this first publication.

Its source. The source of *The Brook*, if the word is not too apt here, is expressly denied by the poet to have been the brook at Somersby, which flows into the sea, and has not 'here and there a grayling'; but it no doubt supplied many charming suggestions that have been incorporated in the lyric. Goethe's influence in the poem is referred to in note 96, 2.

Its plan. The *motif* of the poem is the inevitable change in human life, brought with sad but not morbid feeling into softened contrast with the relative permanence of nature.

Lawrence Aylmer, returned to his English home after twenty years of absence in India, seated on the style, revolves the memories of his old life. He thinks of his dearest brother, the poet Edmund, who left England when he did, but left it only to die; of the brook he loved, now prattling before him, and of the poem Edmund wrote describing it. As the poem sings its way through his memory, Lawrence recalls the scenes and persons associated with the stream,—old farmer Philip Willows, his pretty daughter Katie, and James Willows her betrothed; how, too, he had once carried off old Philip, and endured the torment of his endless talk, so that the lovers might make up a lovers' quarrel. He thinks how time has scattered all these,—old Philip now buried in the churchyard and the happy lovers far off in Australia; when suddenly he looks up, and before him, a veritable Katie Willows, in form, face, and name, as he knew one twenty years before! How fresh the past streams back, what happy explanations follow, and with what joy old friends are once more united!

Its literary value. The charm this poem has had over its readers grows partly out of the people it presents, all instinct with personality, the talkative farmer, the sweet country girl,—these step out of real life into the pages, and issue from the pages before us. It grows partly out of the sweet happy love that pervades the poem like sunlight; partly, too, out of the tender melancholy of Lawrence Aylmer, touched by the pathos of eternal change, of the days that are no more, which like the autumn haze glorifies while it lessens the sunlight. But most of all it comes from the brook that ripples through Aylmer's thought and bickers down the valley before him, and goes on for ever in the poet's lines, calling back our own memories of what is most beautiful in nature, and recreating them with all the glory and the freshness of a dream.

95, 3.—**too late.** To save his life from the malady threatening it.

95, 5.—**scrip.** A commercial document equivalent provisionally for a certificate, showing that the owner holds bonds or shares in a financial concern; here standing for what the poet held his greatest wealth.

95, 7.—**how money breeds.** 'Bears interest.' In Gk, *tokos*, offspring, means interest. Cf. Shakspeare,

"When did friendship take
A breed of barren metal of his friend."

—*Merchant of Venice*, i. iii.

There are still people who hold it wrong to take interest because they hold interest an unnatural thing.

95, 9.—**The thing that is,** etc. 'Having the poet's power to make airy imaginations seem realities.' So in Shakspeare, the poet's pen

"Gives to airy nothing
A local habitation and a name."

—*Midsummer Night's Dream*, v. i.

95, 12.—**flourish'd.** An expression for the Lat. *floruit*, he

flourished, the ordinary mode of expressing the time of greatest influence and renown in a famous man's life.

95, 15.—**mist of green.** The painters love to portray the spring when first appear the leaves—call them not leaves, but a haze of green, not yet materialized into leaves.

95, 17.—**branding.** ‘Scorching.’ Cf. ‘brand’ 11, 11 and note. (The word is connected with ‘burn,’ which has metathesis of *r* from Teut. *brinnan*, to burn. past, *bran*.) Cf.

‘Nor branding summer suns avail
To touch thy thousand years of gloom.’

—*In Memoriam*, ii.

95, 18.—**Neilgherry.** The Neilgherry Hills (Sansk. *nila*, blue, *giri*, mountain) are in Southern India. They are of lofty elevation so that the climate is cool and delightful and the hills afford a favourite resort for invalids.

95, 20.—**primrose fancies.** ‘Happy,’ ‘spring-like.’ The primrose, the earliest flower of spring, became a synonym in Shakspeare of ‘gay,’ as in

“Himself the primrose path of dalliance treads.”

—*Hamlet*, i. iii.

95, 20.—**the boy.** Edmund.

96, 2.—**Whence come you?** etc. There is much in the lyric following to suggest that from Goethe's poem of *Das Bächlein*, Tennyson got the literary impulse for this unequalled brook-song. It is the well-known poem beginning

“Du Bächlein, silberhell und klar,
Du eilst vorüber immerdar,
Am Ufer steh ich, sinn' und sinn':
Wo kommst du her? Wo gehst du hin?”

and the brook, why not? replies

“Ich komm aus dunkler Felsen Schosz.”

96, 3.—**hern.** Heron, of which it is an archaic form. (Mid. Eng. *hern*, contracted from *heron*.)

96, 3.—**coot.** A wild aquatic bird, blackish in colour, haunting reedy places.

96, 6,—**bicker.** Lit. ‘skirmish’; hence Mod. Eng. ‘bicker,

quarrel. The skirmish with arrows, stones, etc. led to the word meaning 'rattling shower of blows,' and then to the brawling of a quick stream upon the stones in its bed.

"Unnumbered glittering streamlets played...
That as they bickered through the shade."

—Thomson, *Castle of Indolence*, iii. 26.

"At the crook of the glen,
Where bickers the burnie."

—Scott, *Monastery*, ix.

96, 7ff.—**thirty hills**, etc. The numbers present a picture, easy to realize, of *many* hills, *thorps*, *bridges*.

96, 9—**thorp**. See note 23, 4. This good English word is still used in Tennyson's native shire.

96, 17.—**more ivy**. Than it had twenty years before.

96, 19ff.—**I chatter**, etc. The onomatopœic effects are wonderfully suggestive of every change in the brook's course.

96, 20.—**In little sharps and trebles**. 'Sharps' and 'trebles' here denote little shrill acute sounds, as in.

"It is the lark that sings so out of tune,
Straining harsh discords and unpleasing sharps."

—Shakspeare, *Romeo and Juliet*, iii. v. 28.

and

"And now with treble soft
The redbreast whistles from a garden croft."

—Keats, *To Autumn*.

96, 23.—**fret**. 'Wear away.' (A.S. *fretan* (= *for-etan*) eat up; not the same word as 'fret' in 38, 9, which is from O.Fr. *frete*. L.L. *ferrata*, iron grating.)

96, 24.—**fallow**. 'A field lying untilled.'

96, 25.—**fairy foreland**. 'Tiny promontory.' 'Fairy' has here the sense of dainty, diminutive, suitable to fairy-land, but in 'fairy bowers,' 106, 20, the idea of beautiful, verdant, such as the fairies would love, is prominent.

96, 25.—**set**. Cf. 57, 7.

96, 26.—**willow-weed**. 'The name is provincial English for a variety of the *Polyg'onum* or knot-weed,' says the Centur Dict. But Tennyson refers to the willow-herb (*epilobium*

hirsutum), the great hairy willow-herb, common by streams "Our stream-sides...receive an additional ornament when, during July and Augustt. his willow-herb grows there in profusion. Most of the rills...and streams...and stagnant ditches can then boast this ornament. Often the purple blossom waving at a distance...invites the wanderer to some cool sequestered spot. The foliage is of greyish green tint, and the large blossoms are reddish purple."—Pratt, *Flowering Plants*, ii. 283.

"gaudy Golden Flag,
Gleaming above like a magician's wand,—
And purple Willow-herb, and Violet,
The poet's pet, grew down beside the rill."

—Calder Campbell (who published in 1838).

96, 26.—**mallow**. The common mallow, flowering with open lilac blossoms from June to August, found

"in sedgy shallows
Where docks, bulrushes, water-flags, and mallows
Choke the rank waste."

(See Pratt, i. 275.)

97, 8.—**grigs**. A cricket, or, as here, a grasshopper. (Probably the same word as *crick*. Dutch *kriek*, cricket.)

97, 12.—**grayling**. A fish with a large dorsal fin, in size between the trout and whitefish. It "haunts clear and rapid streams, and particularly such as flow through mountainous countries."—Pennant, quoted in Cent. Dict.

97, 15.—**water-break**. A Tennysonian word probably,—'the ripple made by the stream breaking upon a stone.'

97, 22.—**of our century, yet most meek**. An insinuation of the forwardness and mannishness of the modern girl.

97, 24.—**lissome**. 'Lithesome.' 'lithe.' 'supple.' (The word is only a form of *lithesome*, which is from A.S. *lithe*, soft gentle.)

97, 25.—**bashful azure**. A condensed expression for 'bashful and azure.' Cf. 'flushing silence,' 99. 8.

97, 26.—**when the shell, etc**. The touch of nature again is most exact.

98, 7.—**a hoary eyebrow.** The arch of the bridge under which you see the gleam of the low sky.

98, 9.—**A random bar of Bonny Doon.** A few notes of the music of Burns's song beginning

“Ye banks and braes o' bonnie Doon.”

The Doon is the Ayrshire river.

98, 15.—**woodbine.** See note 68, 8.

98, 17.—**Fresh apple-blossom.** Referring to her beautiful pink hue. What beauty the comparisons add to the idyllic charm, serving the double purpose of illustration and suggestion of country sights.

Tennyson uses great freedom in the adjectival use of nouns ; cf. 97, 26.

98, 17.—**boon.** ‘Something asked as a favour.’ (O. Norse *bōn*, A.S. *bēn*, prayer.)

98, 20.—**Who dabbling in the fount,** etc. This is the strong presentation of the evils of reading novels, which awaken emotions of love and pity, etc. that are satisfied by the course of the story, without prompting a single loving deed or act of pity. Thus the habit of novel-reading brings about a weakening of the bond between our feelings and our acts, so that we grow sentimental towards suffering but remiss in active beneficence. So, too, people who talk over-much of projects of helping humanity are apt to grow satisfied with fine-sounding phrases. The evil is discussed by Ruskin, *Of Queens' Gardens*, ¶ 76.

The philosophy is sound, but it is a foreign element in this idyllic picture. It is a digression for the sake of social science, not poetry.

98, 20.—**fictive tears.** Rising from merely imaginary ills. (‘Fictive,’ imaginary, feigned, from L. *fictus*, made.)

98, 21.—**mealy-mouth'd.** ‘Over-finespoken.’

99, 1.—**prest the cause.** ‘Pressed her to tell the cause.’

99, 3.—**Who anger'd James . . . snatch'd her eyes.** “Katie's reception of the question seems to imply that the narrator, Laurence Aylmer, is the guilty party.”—Rowe-Webb. One

feels this explanation out of keeping with the characters. Katie was a sweet pretty girl and consequently loved to tease her lover by pretending interest in other men; she knew she was to blame for the quarrel, and blushed her embarrassment and contrition.

99, 6.—**wizard pentagram.** The pentagram is a figure in the shape of a five-pointed star, which can be made with five straight lines. (Gk. *pente*, five, *gramme*, a line.) The figure was used in magical ceremonies, and was considered a defense against evil spirits.

99, 7.—**let my query pass Unclaim'd.** Cf. 74, 18. 'Unclaim'd,' 'unanswered,' as if not belonging to her.

99, 21.—**meadow-sweet.** A plant of the genus *Spiræa*. It is among the loveliest of English wildflowers. "Its white blossoms, tinged with yellowish green, are in crowded clusters, and are so light and feathery, that the slightest wind ruffles them... The stem is usually about two or three feet high... The blossoms of the Meadow-sweet appear in July and August, when they quiver beside many a stream... The fragrance in the open air is delightful.—Pratt, *Flowering Plants*, etc., ii. 173f.

99, 25f.—**lanes of his wheat-suburb.** 'The ricks of stacked grain, looking like outlying cottages of his farm-house.'

100, 4.—**in session.** 'Perched in rows, moving and cooing resembling an assembly of parliament.'

100, 5.—**Approved him, bowing,** etc. 'Approve' is used here as meaning 'confirm,' 'give one's assent to;' as in Shakspeare,

"That, if again this apparition come,
He may approve our eyes, and speak to it."

—*Hamlet*, i. i.

'The pigeons assented to the farmer's praises, bowing,' etc.

100, 7.—**shuddering.** 'Shivering from the cold.'

100, 9.—**Chase.** Also written 'chace,' 'the unenclosed game preserve of a private owner.' (O.F. *chace*, from *chacier*, to hunt.)

100, 11.—**Twinkled the innumerable ear,** etc. The deer are

almost hidden in the underwood, revealing themselves only by the quick movement of ear and tail. Mr. Collins uses this line in illustration of Tennyson's "delight in substituting subtle suggestiveness for simplicity and directness of expression," making it represent "the flight of scared deer."

The metrical movement should not be passed over. Notice the added short syllable in the second foot and the weak stress in the third to indicate quick movement.

Twinkled the innumera - ble ear and tail.

— ◡ | ◡ ◡ — | ◡◡ | ◡ — | ◡ —

and cf.

'Myriads of rivulets hurrying thro' the lawn...
And murmuring of innumerable bees.'

—*The Princess*, vii.

100, 21.—**hung**. 'Remained unsettled.'

100, 22.—**He gave them line**. The metaphor is that of a fisherman taking his time, playing the fish till it is tired out, so that he may be sure of it; cf. note 98, 17.

100, 23.—**bailiff**. 'Servant having charge and management of property for the owner.'

100, 23.—**Golden Fleece**. An inn; the name has a forgotten reference to the object of the expedition of the Argonauts.

101, 4.—**from the point**. 'Away from the question in hand.'

101, 6.—**hand in hand**. Ratifying the bargain by 'shaking hands on it.'

101, 7.—**in sight of haven**. 'Drew a breath of relief, seeing the end of the tiresome story.'

101, 9.—**coltish chronicle**. 'The pedigree of the colt he had sold.'

101, 16.—**thrice as long**. The sun had time to sink far down in the west during the story.

101, 21.—**covers**. 'Shrubbery, thicket, etc., affording a 'cover' for game.'

101, 24.—**slip**. See note 20, 8.

101, 24.—**slide**. See note 20, 8.

101, 24.—**gloom**. See note 21, 3.

101, 24.—**glance**. 'Sparkle.' 'Gloom' and 'glance' depict the stream in shadow and sunlight.

101, 26.—**netted sunbeam**. 'Netted' is not "forming a network as it shines through the over-hanging branches."—Rowe-Webb. The light playing through the ripples shines on the sandy bottom netted by the shadows of the ripples. This pretty phenomenon should be noted in nature. Cf. Lowell,

"As the shadows of sun-gilt ripples
On the yellow bed of a brook."

—*The Changeling*.

102, 3.—**shingly bars**. 'Shallows of gravel, beside deep quiet water.'

102, 4.—**cresses**. The water-cresses, impeding the current.

102, 12.—**Arno**. The Italian river, on which stands Florence.

102, 12f.—**dome Of Brunelleschi** (*broo nel les'kē*). The dome of the cathedral of Santa Maria in Florence, the largest in the world. It was built by Filippo Brunelleschi (1377-1444), a famous Italian architect.

102, 17.—**By the long wash**, etc. Dr. Rolfe writes: The poet is said to have specially prided himself on the sustained rhythmical quality of this line. Bayard Taylor thought it surpassed by Bryant's in *The Sea*,

"The long wave rolling from the Southern Pole
To break upon Japan."

102, 19.—**breathes in April-autumns**. 'In' is unaccented. This read in the early editions,

'And breathes in converse seasons.'

In either case the line denotes the reversing in the Southern hemisphere of the months which in the Northern distinguish the different seasons. Autumn below the equator, for example, contains the month of April.

102, 20.—**So**. Not 'so spake' (Rowe-Webb), but so.... mused,' l. 24.

102, 21.—**rolling**. Cf. note 93, 1.

102, 22.—**waifs.** ‘Stray bits.’

102, 23.—**tonsured head.** The head with the hair shorn or shaven, after the manner of the priests of the Roman Catholic and Greek churches. In the former some hair is left in commemoration of the crown of thorns; hence, as here, poetically, ‘having a bald spot like a tonsure.’ (L. *tonsura*, a clipping.)

102, 23.—**forlorn.** Lonely, having lost his kinsfolk and old friends.

102, 26.—**Bindweed-bells.** ‘Bindweed’ is the English name of plants of the genus *Convolvulus*, having a delicate bell-shaped flower.

“The cumbrous bind-weed, with its wreaths and bells.”

—Wordsworth, *Excursion*, i. 1761.

102, 26.—**briony rings.** The tendrils of ‘briony’ or ‘briony,’ a tall climbing plant.

103, 2ff.—**eyes a bashful azure**, etc. The repetition from 97, 25ff beautifully prepares us for the disclosure.

103, 7.—**were.** The less abrupt subjunctive, for ‘is.’

103, 12.—**glimmering strangeness.** ‘A glimmering consciousness that his dream is a dream and not reality.’

103, 24.—**But she.**—There are reserve and courtesy beneath the change of pronoun. One notices also that Katie does not mention her father, so that there is the vague suggestion of his death, leaving in the imaginative mind the thought that Lawrence Aylmer, who unconsciously had loved Katie Wil-
lows, might now somehow through her find his middle age grow less forlorn.



THE VOYAGE.

First publication. *The Voyage* was first published in the volume entitled *Enoch Arden*, 1864, which contained, as well, *Aylmer's Field*, and *The Northern Farmer*. The only differences from the present edition are unimportant variations in punctuation.

Its meaning and value. Professor Palgrave (p. 251) regards the poem as an Allegory: "Life as Energy, in the great ethical sense of the word,—Life as the pursuit of the Ideal,—is figured in this brilliantly-descriptive allegory." Stopford Brooke adds to this words that emphasize "the wild attraction of the deep sea." that we meet, as well, in *The Sailor Boy* and *Ulysses*. "It lives," he says, "in *The Voyage*, that delightful poem, with its double meaning, half of the life on the sea and half of the life of the soul, and wholly of those who, like seamen have no care for business and science and the real world; who race after the undiscovered shore, who follow the gleam, who live for ideas, not for things... With his turn for truth, for writing of only what he had observed, Tennyson does not take us into the deep ocean, save in one stanza of *In Memoriam*, in *The Voyage*, and in a few scattered lines. He rarely goes beyond the edge of the cliff or margin of the beach," p. 405f.

On its spiritual side, Mr. Brooke takes *The Voyage* with *Merlin* and *The Gleam*, *The Voice and the Peak*, *The Two Voices* as "poems inflamed with the spirit that pursues after the perfection of beauty." Tennyson threw, he says, "the passion of his spiritual pursuit into a different form in *The Voyage*; painting this aspiration in those that feel it with too much lightness of character, as if it were only a gay love of youth; yet who never turned aside from it—the happy tribe

who know not the unremitting strife, the serious passion, or the awful vision of the unapproachable loveliness, which are the badge and the burden of the greater artists,"—p. 505f.

The spirit and fire of the Englishman's love of the sea is depicted in *The Voyage*, in a way that vividly recalls *The Ancient Mariner*.

I.

104, 3.—**the painted buoy**, etc. Cf. *Gareth and Lynette*,

'And could not wholly bring him under, more
Than loud Southwesterns, rolling ridge on ridge,
The buoy that rides at sea, and dips and springs
For ever.'

104, 8.—**main**. 'The expanse of ocean'; an abbreviation from 'the main (chief) sea.'

II.

104, 13.—**Dry**. See note 89, 20.

104, 14.—**Lady's head**. An ornamental figure or bust is usually placed at the ship's head, under the bowsprit, especially with sailing vessels, called the figure-head. Here the figure-head is carved to represent the Virgin.

104, 15.—**shrill salt**. The salt wave dashing against the prow.

104, 15.—**sheer'd**. An old spelling of 'shear,' to cut through. They were sailing with the head well up to the wind.

104, 19.—**seem'd to sail**, etc. The plunging ship would rise bow-clear, as if to journey to the sun, towards which, sailing south, it was pointed.

III.

105, 3.—**the threshold of the night**. This idea of the threshold, gates, etc. of the west is very old in literature.

105, 4.—**Ocean-lane of fire**, etc. Cf.

'Like a lane of beams athwart the sea.'

—*The Golden Year*.

105, 6f. —**purple-skirted robe**, etc. The purple of the evening sky gradually dropping over the west as the yellow sunset faded.

105, 8. —**slumber of the globe**. 'Darkness.'

105, 16. —**the homeless ocean**, etc. Cf. 38, 2 and note.

105, 17. —**boss**. 'Convex projection in the centre of a shield.'

105, 18. —**Of her own halo**, etc. The bright moon was seen through mist, surrounded with a 'ring' or 'halo' (the 'shield').

V.

105, 20. —**shifted**. 'Changed.'

106, 4. —**nutmeg rocks...spice**. Tropical islands of the East or West Indies covered with nutmeg-trees or clove-trees.

VI.

106, 6. —**peaks that flamed**. 'Burning volcanoes.'

106, 7. —**Gloom'd**. See note 21, 3.

106, 7. —**quivering**. Responsive to subterranean commotion.

106, 8. —**ashy rains**. The cloud of volcanic ashes, shading the low coast, spread out in the heavens in shape like a plume or a pine-tree. The appearance of Vesuvius in eruption is like a vast black pine-tree.

106, 10. —**floods**. 'Rivers.'

106, 11. —**scudded**. See note 28, 11.

VII.

106, 16. —**stream'd**. Cf. 28, 11 and note.

106, 17. —**burn'd...with wakes of fire**. Referring to the phosphorescent gleam of the sea (or more properly the animalculæ in the sea) particularly noticeable in the waves the ship sends out as she ploughs the waters.

106, 19. —**carven craft**, etc. The naked natives of southern islands put out to passing ships to barter flowers and fruit.

106, 22. —**nor...nor**. 'Neither...nor,'—a poetic order and a poetic phrase.

VIII.

107, 7.—**fixt.** ‘With gaze intent on.’ The figure is that of the Ideal, the infinite progress possible for man
 ‘As he stands on the heights of his life with a glimpse of a height that is higher.’

IX.

107, 12ff.—**Like Fancy**, etc. The highest object of desire appearing now to be the powers of imagination, now the familiar virtues.

107, 15f.—**high on waves...crown'd the sea.** Suggesting Hope as the beautiful arch of the rainbow, the “bow o promise.”

107, 17.—**the bloodless point.** Cf. 47, 5ff.

X.

107, 20.—**one among us.** Representing the cynical and pessimistic side of the human mind.

XI.

108, 9.—**laws of nature**, etc. That is, they held the spirit more than flesh, more powerful than material laws, seeing they had the strength to penetrate through all obstacles in their pursuit of the Ideal.

108, 12.—**whirlwind's heart of peace.** In rotary storms such as the cyclone and hurricane the air whirls around a central stretch of calm.

108, 13.—**counter.** ‘Contrary,’ ‘opposed to them’; cf. 11‘ 12.

XII.

108, 17.—**Now mate is blind**, etc. The voyage of life is drawing to a close; they are growing old, 'tis time to take in sail; but the yearning never dies, the quest never ceases out of their spirit, for

‘We may sail for evermore.’

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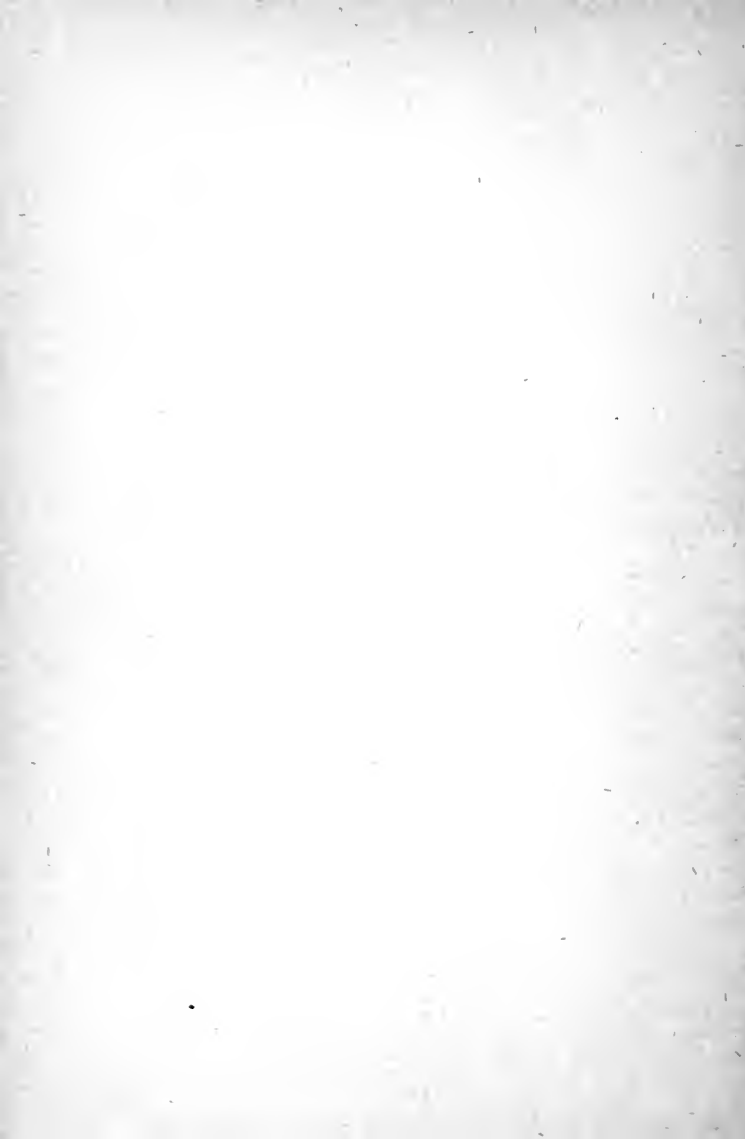
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APPENDICES.



APPENDIX I.

SOME OF TENNYSON'S MSS., ILLUSTRATING HIS INFINITE PAINSTAKING IN COMPOSITION.

There are in Toronto very valuable MSS. of some of Tennyson's poems, autograph copies of the intercalary songs of *The Princess*, the property of Theodore H. Rand, Esq., M.A., D.C.L., Chancellor of McMaster University. If any one were given the opportunity to choose an autograph of the poet, he would undoubtedly choose one of Tennyson's lyrics ; and of these none are of a more perfect beauty than the songs of *The Princess*. But in addition to being the precious records of the master's hand, these MSS. have a unique interest in representing, not the text as found in the printed edition, but one that shows the songs as they were before their revision in the printed text. From a comparison of the MSS. and the printed text, one can see the infinite painstaking with which the poet revised his work, a process noted already in *The Lady of Shalott*, *The Lotos-Eaters*, etc. These two features, the representation of the poet's autographs and his ceaseless labour in revising his work, form the substance of Dr. Rand's article entitled *Limae Labor*, in the *McMaster University Monthly*, June, 1891. This article has been revised by its author and placed at our disposal, with a kindness we cannot sufficiently acknowledge, for use in this edition. Dr. Rand writes as follows :—

Some years ago the inventor of the Acme skate called my attention to thirteen skates displayed in order on his office wall. These products of his brain and hand disclosed in a single view the laborious revisions to which he had subjected his original conception. Compared with the perfected skate the first was intricate and complex in its structure. Every revision shewed

a less number of separate parts, and this increasing simplicity resulted finally in a complete unity or wholeness of the implement for the purpose intended. The inventor had repeatedly revised his first conception, and its concrete expression in steel. This is the history of all mechanical invention. It is equally the history of all abiding products of thought in which form is essential.

One artist uses stone or bronze ;
 One, light and shade ; he, plastic speech ;
 To catch and fix in ideal form
 THE PERFECT is the aim of each.

Of all materials in which thought finds expression, language is the most plastic and the most enduring. I have often thought what curious and instructive revelations could be made by the waste baskets of the great poets,—the greatest masters of the embodiment of thought in perfect form. Their best work appears so natural and complete that we imagine these gifted souls are inspired, and that they are, therefore, lifted above the necessity of patient thought and toilsome revision in respect both of construction and verbal expression. If we could know the facts we should find that the poems which live from age to age embody results, both as to contents and expression, which are the outcome of manifold unwritten or written revisions. In proportion as we recognize this truth are we qualified to appreciate the marvels of the achievements of the poets. Genius as well as talent must put itself severely to school. This is especially true when language is the medium employed as the mould of thought, since no other is at once so mobile and fluid and so rigid and monumental.

I wish to illustrate this process of *limae labor*—revision, polishing, perfecting—by a reference to the poems of Lord Tennyson. The Poet Laureate is an acknowledged master in the use of language, ranking next after Shakspere and Milton. In addition to his known scrupulous care in composition before publication, we may by a studious comparison of the various editions of his poems discover abundant evidence of extraordinary patience in perfecting the products of his genius. In *Memoriam*, the greatest and most elaborately wrought of elegiac poems, was given to the world in 1850. The lyrics which now appear as xxxix,

‘Old warder of these buried bones,’
 and lix,
 ‘O Sorrow, wilt thou live with me,’

were subsequently inserted in the poem. Some forty lines, in different parts of the elegy, have also undergone verbal revision. Many instances of retouching could be cited from most of his other poems, some of the changes producing lines among the

most beautiful the poet has written. To give a single example. When *A Dream of Fair Women* was published in 1830, we had :

'The tall masts flicker'd as they lay afloat ;
The temples, and the people, and the shore ;
One drew a sharp knife through my tender throat,
Slowly and nothing more.'

We now have :

'The high masts flicker'd as they lay afloat ;
The crowds, the temples, waver'd, and the shore ;
The bright death quivered at the victim's throat ;
Touched ; and I knew no more.'

The most extensive revisions appear in *The Palace of Art*, and in *The Princess; A Melley*. I shall confine myself to illustrations from this last poem. *The Princess* was first published in 1847. The text was submitted to a reconstructive and polishing process in the editions of 1848, 1850, 1851, and 1853, when it reached its permanent form. The poet's delicate sense of proportion and balance as well as deftness and Horatian vigour of expression are sharply revealed in the process. In the edition in 1850 :

'His name was Gama : cracked and small his voice,
But bland the smile that pucker'd up his cheeks.'

In that of 1851 :

'His name was Gama : cracked and small his voice,
But bland the smile that like a *wrinkling wind
On glassy water drove his cheeks in lines.'

The following is a noteworthy and suggestive instance of successive changes. In the editions of 1847 and 1848 :

"Down from the bastion'd walls we dropt by night,
And flying reach'd the frontier."

* Compare Shelley's Prince Athanase :

— "but o'er the visage wan
Of Athanase, a ruffling atmosphere
Of dark emotion, a swift shadow ran,
Like wind upon some forest-bosomed lake,
Glassy and dark."

There is another very beautiful passage in *The Princess* which was certainly suggested by lines of Shelley's *Prometheus Unbound* :

'A wind arose and rushed upon the South,
And shook the songs, the whispers, and the shrieks
Of the wild woods together ; and a Voice
Went with it, ' Follow, follow, thou shalt win.'"
— *The Princess*.

"A wind arose among the pines ; it shook
The clinging music from their boughs, and then
Low, sweet, faint sounds, like the farewell of ghosts,
Were heard : Oh, follow, follow me !"
— *Prometheus Unbound*.

In the edition of 1850 :

‘Down from the bastion’d wall, suspense by night,
Like threaded spiders, from a balk, we dropt,
And flying reach’d the frontier.’

In the edition of 1851 :

— ‘from the bastioned walls
Like threaded spiders, one by one, we dropt,
And flying reach’d the frontier.’

There are many striking and beautiful lines omitted from the poem after the editions of 1847 and 1848. The reason for these omissions can be found only in Tennyson’s increasing responsiveness to organic symmetry and co-action of minutest parts. The following italicized lines are examples of such omissions :

“More soluble is this knot,
Like almost all the rest if men were wise,
By gentleness than war. I want her love.
What were I nigher this altho’ I dash’d
Your cities into shards with catapults,
And dusted down your domes with mangonels.”

From the reply of the Princess to Lady Blanche, some twenty-five lines of vigorous satire have been omitted. The character of the heroine clearly gains in dignity by this revision. In the third edition, that of 1850, the Prologue and Conclusion were re-written, and the fine passage of eighteen lines,

“So Lilia sang: we thought her half possess’d,
She struck such warbling fury thro’ the words,”

appeared for the first time. There were also numerous slight alterations, omissions, and additions in other parts of the poem. The subtle references to the “weird seizures” of the Prince, which stir the imagination so deeply, were all added in the edition of 1851.

These examples of *limae labor*, be it remembered, are all drawn from what, for the time being, was a completed product of a master of literary form, and which he had given to the world. Could we inspect the revisions which *The Princess* underwent before it was published in 1847, the patient labor of the poet would command even more fully our admiration.

The six intercalary songs in *The Princess* were first published in the third edition. These lyrics are even more widely known than the poem of which they now form so essential a part. They are among the most beautiful in the English language, whose linked sweetness they have borne to every civilized people under heaven. Although these lyrics have not undergone any revision since their first publication, their wonderful delicacy and perfection of structure and form bear witness that they are

‘All-perfect, finished to the finger-nail.’

Through the generosity of a valued friend it was my good

Home they brought her warrior dead:
She nor swooned nor uttered cry:
All her maidens whispering said,
She must weep or she will die

Then they praised him softer low
Call'd him worthy to be loved,
Truest friend & noblest foe;
Yet she neither spoke nor moved.

The splendour falls on castle walls
And snowy summits old in story:
The long light shakes across the lakes
And the wild catcatch leaps in glory.

(Chorus)

O hark, O hear! how thin & clear
And thinner, clearer farther going
O sweet & far from cliff & scar
The horns of Elfland faintly blowing
Blow, let us hear the purple glens replying
Blow, bugle; answer echoes dying, dying, dying

'I love they die in yon rich sky
They faint on hill or field or river
Our echoes roll from soul to soul
And grow for ever & for ever.
Blow bugle blow set the wild echoes flying
And answer echoes answer dying dying dying

==

Home they brought her warrior dead:
She nor swooned nor uttered cry:
All her mardens whispering said,
She must weep or she will die

Then they praised him softer low
Call'd him worthy to be loved,
Truest friend & noblest foe;
Yet she neither spoke nor moved.

Stole a maiden from her place,
Lightly to the warrior stept,
Took the face cloth from the face:
Yet she neither moved nor wept.

Rose a nurse of ninety years,
Set his child upon her knee -
'Like summer tempest come her tears
Sweet my child, I live for thee.'

When all among the thundering drums
Thy soldier in the battle stands,
Thy face across his fancy comes
And gives the battle to his hands:
A moment while the trumpet's blow,
He sees his brood about thy knee -
The next - like fire he meets the foe;
Strikes him dead for them & thee.
Tara ta taratara!

Ask me no more: the moon may draw the
The cloud may stoop from heaven & take the ships ^(sea)
With fold on fold, of mountain or of cape;
But O too fond, when have I answered thee?
Ask me no more.

Ask me no more: what answer should I give
I love not hollow cheek or faded eye:
Yet O my friend, I will not have thee die!
Ask me no more, lest I should bid thee live;
Ask me no more:

Ask me no more: thy date & mine are seeds:
I strove against the stream but all in vain
Let the great river take me to the main:
No more Dear love for at a touch I yield:
Ask me no more.

As thro' the land at eve we went,
And pluck'd the ripened ears,
We fell out my wife and I,
And kiss'd again with tears:
And blessings on the falling-mine
That all the more endear'd,
When we fall out with those we love,
And kiss again with tears!
For when we came where Cest the chits
We lost in other years,
There above the little grave,
We kiss'd again with tears.

17 These are not written regularly but just as they
turned up

Stole a maiden from her place,
Lightly to the warrior stept.
Took the face cloth from the face
Yet she neither moved nor wept.

Rose a nurse of ninety years,
Set his child upon her knee -
'Like summer tempest came her tears
Sweet my child, I live for thee.

1

but we no more:

www.2011

ask me no more.



1

As thro' the land at eve we went,
And pluck'd the ripen'd ears,
We fell out my wife and I,

and kiss again with arms:

And blessings on the falling-one

That all the more endears,

When we fall out with those we love,

And kiss again with tears!

"For when we came where Cest the child

We lost in other years,

There above the little grave,

We kiss again with tears.

LI These are not written regularly but just as they turned up

fortune to come into possession of an autograph copy of five of these lyrics,—a copy made by the Poet Laureate before their publication. This manuscript copy contains the well-nigh perfected text, yet it will be seen that the work of revision did not reach its completion until publication was made in *The Princess*. The following is a fac-simile reproduction of the MS.

It will be observed that the MS of "*The Splendour falls on Castle Walls*" differs from the published text by the absence of the two closing lines of the first stanza :

'Blow, bugle, blow, set the wild echoes flying,
Blow, bugle; answer, echoes, dying, dying, dying.'

The word "(Chorus)" is inserted between the first and second stanzas. This word was added subsequently to the making of the copy, as the colour of the ink distinctly shews. This suggests that another hand has inserted the word in the MS. since the publication of the lyric. If we read the first two stanzas together as they appear in the MS. it will be at once suggested to us that the absent lines did not form a part of the first stanza, but were an afterthought of the poet in response to his feeling for symmetry and artistic completeness. This suggestion is strongly confirmed by the fact that the last two lines of the second and third stanzas are not alike throughout. The word "(Chorus)," therefore, does not indicate the actual text of the two lines which are not in the manuscript copy of the first stanza, and which, it is to be noted, are unlike the closing lines of either of the other stanzas.*

There is but one change in the lyric "*Home they Brought her Warrior Deuil*,"—the substitution in the printed text of "watching" for "whispering" in the first stanza. This song is a translation, heightened in form and expression by the poet, of the Anglo-Saxon fragment *Gudrun*. Tennyson has another version of this song, published long since, and recently set to music by Lady Tennyson.†

*But see Lord Tennyson's letter to Dr. Rand.

†A beautiful variation of this song and of the one following have never been inserted in *The Princess*. They are special adaptations for music :

I.

'Home they brought him slain with spears,
They brought him home at even-fall:
All alone, she sits and hears
Echoes in his empty hall,
Sounding on the morrow.

The sun peeped in from open field,
The boy began to leap and prance,
Rode upon his father's lance,
Beat upon his father's shield—
"O hush, my joy, my sorrow!"

A comparison of the printed text of the following lyric with that of the MS. shews a striking improvement through revision :

*'Thy voice is heard thro' rolling drums,
That beat to battle where he stands ;
Thy face across his fancy comes,
And gives the battle to his hands ;
A moment, while the trumpets blow,
He sees his brood about thy knee ;
The next, like fire he meets the foe,
And strikes him dead for thine and thee.'*

The first two lines of the MS. copy were recast before publication, "and" inserted at the beginning of the last line, and "them" changed to "thine." The trumpet blare, "Tara ta tantara !" in the MS. does not appear in the printed text.

It will be seen that the lyric "*Ask me no more*," has been changed in two words only. They are here printed in italics :

*'Ask me no more : the moon may draw the sea ;
The cloud may stoop from heaven and take the shape,
With fold to fold, of mountain and of cape ;
But O too fond, when have I answer'd thee ?
Ask me no more.*

*Ask me no more : what answer should I give !
I love not hollow cheek or faded eye :
Yet, O my friend, I will not have thee die !
Ask me no more, lest I should bid thee live ;
Ask me no more.*

*Ask me no more : thy fate and mine are seal'd :
I strove against the stream and all in vain :
Let the great river take me to the main :
No more, dear love, for at a touch I yield ;
Ask me no more.'*

Perhaps in none of the examples of revision which I have given from *The Princess* is that deftness of touch for which the Poet Laureate stands pre-eminent revealed more delicately than in the two slight verbal changes in this song.

II.

*'Lady, let the rolling drums
Beat to battle where thy warrior stands :
Now thy face across his fancy comes,
And gives the battle to his hands.*

*Lady, let the trumpets blow,
Clasp the little babes about thy knee ;
Now thy warrior father meets the foe,
And strikes him dead for thine and thee.'*

The lines in italics in the last lyric were added to those of the MS. prior to its publication in *The Princess* :

‘As thro’ the land at eve we went,
And pluck’d the ripen’d ears,
We fell out, my wife and I,
O we fell out I know not why,
And kiss’d again with tears.
And blessings on the falling out
That all the more endears,
When we fall out with those we love
And kiss again with tears !
For when we came where lies the child
We lost in other years,
There above the little grave,
O there above the little grave,
We kiss’d again with tears.’

The addition of these repetends gives a wonderful emphasis and charm to the song. Mrs. Browning shares with Tennyson the power to use with splendid effect this emphasis of refrain so native to the Hebrew poets.

Composition in its very nature implies plan and sustained effort. In presenting a specimen of Tennyson’s work as a striking illustration of the importance of *limae labor*, I am not to be understood as ignoring or under-valuing spontaneity, but rather as emphasizing the practical truth that unstinted painstaking is an essential element in the production of literary work of the highest quality.



APPENDIX II.

POEMS, FOR SIGHT WORK.

[Of the following poems the first eleven with the accompanying questions are selected from examination papers set by the University of Toronto and the Education Department of Ontario during the past five years. With the remaining poems, they are intended to furnish the material for a slight study of literature without special preparation and without notes and other critical apparatus.]

TO DAFFODILS.

Fair Daffodils, we weep to see You haste away so soon ; As yet the early-rising sun Has not attained his noon.	5
Stay, stay, Until the hasting day Has run But to the even-song ; And, having pray'd together, we Will go with you along.	10
We have short time to stay, as you ; We have as short a spring ; As quick a growth to meet decay, As you, or anything.	15
We die As your hours do, and dry Away, Like to the summer's rain ; Or as the pearls of morning's dew, Ne'er to be found again.	20

—*Robert Herrick.*

1. State fully
 - (a) the circumstances of time, place, and mood under which this poem has been professedly (that is, as appears from the poem) written; and
 - (b) the subject of each stanza and of the poem.
2. Explain fully the meaning, sentence by sentence, commenting especially upon those expressions that seem to you most beautiful and suggestive.
3. Explain the metrical structure; and shew, as well as you can, that it and the language are in harmony with the poet's mood and thoughts.
4. (a) What is the prevailing sentiment, and how should it be brought out in reading?
- (b) Mark, with reasons, the especially emphatic words in the first stanza.
- (c) How would you make plain in reading the likeness expressed in the second stanza.

DEAR HARP OF MY COUNTRY.

Dear Harp of my Country ! in darkness I found thee,
 The cold chain of silence had hung o'er thee long,
 When proudly, my own Island Harp, I unbound thee,
 And gave all thy chords to light, freedom, and song !

The warm lay of love and the light note of gladness 5
 Have waken'd thy fondest, thy liveliest thrill ;
 But, so oft hast thou echo'd the deep sigh of sadness,
 That ev'n in thy mirth it will steal from thee still.

Dear Harp of my Country ! farewell to thy numbers,
 This sweet wreath of song is the last we shall twine ! 10
 Go, sleep with the sunshine of fame on thy slumbers,
 Till touch'd by some hand less unworthy than mine ;

If the pulse of the patriot, soldier, or lover,
 Have throbb'd at our lay, 't is thy glory alone ;
 I was *but* as the wind, passing heedlessly over, 15
 And all the wild sweetness I waked was thy own.

—*Thomas Moore.*

1. Explain, in concise and simple language, the meaning of this poem, clause by clause.
2. Indicate, in detail, the various devices which give a poetical character to the expression of the third stanza, and which elevate it above the style of simple prose.

PROSPICE.

Fear death ?—to feel the fog in my throat,
 The mist in my face,
 When the snows begin, and the blasts denote
 I am nearing the place,
 The power of the night, the press of the storm, 5
 The post of the foe,
 Where he stands, the Arch Fear in a visible form,
 Yet the strong man must go :
 For the journey is done and the summit attained,
 And the barriers fall, 10
 Though a battle's to fight ere the guerdon be gained,
 The reward of it all.
 I was ever a fighter, so—one fight more,
 The best and the last !
 I would hate that death bandaged my eyes, and forbore, 15
 And bade me creep past.
 No ! let me taste the whole of it, fare like my peers
 The heroes of old,
 Bear the brunt, in a minute pay glad life's arrears
 Of pain, darkness and cold. 20
 For sudden the worst turns the best to the brave,
 The black minute's at end,
 And the elements' rage, the fiend-voices that rave,
 Shall dwindle, shall blend,
 Shall change, shall become first a peace out of pain, 25
 Then a light, then thy breast,
 O thou soul of my soul ! I shall clasp thee again,
 And with God be the rest !

—*Robert Browning.*

ALL SAINTS.

One feast, of holy days the crest,
 I, though no Churchman, love to keep,
 All-Saints,—the unknown good that rest
 In God's still memory folded deep ;
 The bravely dumb that did their deed, 5
 And scorned to blot it with a name,
 Men of the plain heroic breed,
 That loved Heaven's silence more than fame.

Such lived not in the past alone,
 But thread to-day the unheeding street, 10
 And stairs to Sin and Famine known,
 Sing with the welcome of their feet ;
 The den they enter grows a shrine,
 The grimy sash an oriel burns,
 Their cup of water warms like wine, 15
 Their speech is filled from heavenly urns.

About their brows to me appears
 An aureole traced in tenderest light,
 The rainbow-gleam of smiles through tears
 In dying eyes by them made bright, 20
 Of souls that shivered on the edge
 Of that chill ford repassed no more,
 And in their mercy felt the pledge
 And sweetness of the farther shore.

—James Russell Lowell.

1. State the subject of the whole poem, and of each stanza.
2. (a) Point out the peculiarity of construction in the first four lines.
 (b) Explain the meaning of the 6th and of the 8th line of the 1st stanza of C.
3. Explain fully the meaning of the 2nd stanza of C, clause by clause.

TO THE SKYLARK.

Ethereal Minstrel ! Pilgrim of the sky !
 Dost thou despise the earth where cares abound ?
 Or, while the wings aspire, are heart and eye
 Both with thy nest upon the dewy ground ?
 Thy nest, which thou canst drop into at will, 5
 Those quivering wings composed, that music still !

To the last point of vision, and beyond,
 Mount, daring Warbler ! that love-prompted strain,
 ('Twixt thee and thine a never-failing bond)
 Thrills not the less the bosom of the plain : 10
 Yet might'st thou seem, proud privilege ! to sing
 All independent of the leafy spring.

Leave to the Nightingale her shady wood ;
 A privacy of glorious light is thine ;
 Whence thou dost pour upon the world a flood 15
 Of harmony, with instinct more divine ;
 Type of the wise who soar, but never roam ;
 True to the kindred points of Heaven and Home !

—William Wordsworth.

1. In a single phrase or short sentence state the main idea brought out in this poem as a whole. What do the first two stanzas contribute towards bringing out this main idea ?

2. (a) "To the last point of vision," l. 7. Give clearly the meaning of this phrase.

(b) "a never-failing bond", l. 9. Why does the poet call the bond "never-failing" ?

(c) "Thrills not the less", l. 10. Explain the force and reference of "the less" here.

(d) "A privacy of glorious light", l. 14. Give clearly the meaning of this phrase.

(e) "with instinct more divine", l. 16. "More divine" than what, and why "more divine" ?

(f) What do you gather from the poem would be the poet's answer to the questions contained in lines 2 to 4 inclusive ? Give the reasons for your answer.

ON FIRST LOOKING INTO CHAPMAN'S HOMER.

Much have I travell'd in the realms of gold,
 And many goodly states and kingdoms seen ;
 Round many western islands have I been
 Which bards in fealty to Apollo hold.

Oft of one wide expanse had I been told 5
 That deep-brow'd Homer ruled as his demesne :
 Yet did I never breathe its pure serene
 Till I heard Chapman speak out loud and bold :

Then felt I like some watcher of the skies
 When a new planet swims into his ken ; 10
 Or like stout Cortez when with eagle eyes

He stared at the Pacific—and all his men
 Look'd at each other with a wild surmise—
 Silent, upon a peak in Darien.

—John Keats.

1. In a brief, clear, prose sentence give the substantial meaning of each successive pair of lines to the end of the tenth line, and also of the last four lines.

2. (a) Give accurately the meaning of the following words as employed in the lines indicated:—*deep-brow'd* (l. 6), *demesne* (l. 6), *stout* (l. 11), *eagle* (l. 11), *surmise* (l. 13).

(b) *Or like stout Cortez*, etc. Point out clearly wherein lies the resemblance which the poet finds between his own feelings and those of Cortez.

TO —

Look at the fate of summer flowers,
Which blow at day-break, droop ere even-song;
And, grieved at their brief date, confess that ours,
Measured by what we are and ought to be,
Measured by all that, trembling, we foresee, 5
Is not so long !

If human Life do pass away,
Perishing yet more swiftly than the flower,
If we are creatures of a winter's day;
What space hath Virgin's beauty to disclose 10
Her sweets, and triumph o'er the breathing rose ?
Not even an hour !

The deepest grove whose foliage hid
The happiest lovers Arcady might boast,
Could not the entrance of this thought forbid : 15
O be thou wise as they, soul-gifted Maid !
Nor rate too light what must so quickly fade,
So soon be lost !

— William Wordsworth.

1. In a phrase or short sentence express the main idea contained in this poem.

2. Briefly indicate what each stanza contributes to the expression of this idea.

3. Describe the versification of the poem. *i. e.*, the form of the stanza, the lines of which the stanza is composed, and the predominant foot.

4. Tell what you are able to gather from the poem in regard to the person addressed.

5. (a) Explain the meaning of "*even-song*" (l. 2), and "*Arcady*" (l. 14).

(b) Why is *do*, and not *does*, used in line 7 ?

(c) What is the noun implied in "*ours*" (l. 3) ?

(d) What is referred to in "*this thought*" (l. 15).

(e) What is referred to in "*what must so quickly fade*" (l. 17) ?

(f) What does the poet refer to in calling the rose "*breathing*" (l. 11) ?

RESIGNATION.

There is no flock, however watched and tended,
 But one dead lamb is there !
 There is no fireside, howsoe'er defended,
 But has one vacant chair !

The air is full of farewells to the dying, 5
 And mournings for the dead ;
 The heart of Rachel, for her children crying,
 Will not be comforted !

Let us be patient ! These severe afflictions 10
 Not from the ground arise,
 But oftentimes celestial benedictions
 Assume this dark disguise.

We see but dimly through the mists and vapours ;
 Amid these earthly damps,
 What seem to us but sad funereal tapers, 15
 May be heaven's distant lamps.

There is no Death ! What seems so is transition ;
 This life of mortal breath
 Is but a suburb of the life elysian,
 Whose portal we call Death. 20

She is not dead,—the child of our affection,—
 But gone unto that school
 Where she no longer needs our poor protection,
 And Christ himself doth rule.

In that great cloister's stillness and seclusion, 25
 By guardian angels led,
 Safe from temptation, safe from sin's pollution,
 She lives, whom we call dead.

Day after day we think what she is doing 30
 In those bright realms of air ;
 Year after year, her tender steps pursuing,
 Behold her grown more fair.

Thus we do not walk with her, and keep unbroken
 The bond which nature gives,
 Thinking that our remembrance, though unspoken, 35
 May reach her where she lives.

Not as a child shall we again behold her ;
 For when with raptures wild,
 In our embraces we again enfold her,
 She will not be a child ; 40

But a fair maiden in her Father's mansion,
 Clothed with celestial grace ;
 And beautiful with all the soul's expansion
 Shall we behold her face.

And though at times impetuous with emotion, 45
 And anguish long suppress'd,
 The swelling heart heaves, moaning like the ocean,
 That cannot be at rest,—

We will be patient, and assuage the feeling
 We may not wholly stay,— 50
 By silence sanctifying, not concealing,
 The grief that must have way.

—Henry Wadsworth Longfellow.

1. Point out the two sections into which this poem naturally falls, and tell the relation between them.
2. What idea as to the future life is contained in ll. 29-44 ?
3. "*The heart of Rachel... comforted* (ll. 7, 8). Explain the reference.
4. "*Not from the ground arise*" (l. 10). What is the force of these words ?
5. "*Assume this dark disguise*" (l. 12). What is the disguise ?
6. What is "*The bond which nature gives*" (l. 34) ?
7. What are the ideas suggested by the word "*elysian*" (l. 19) ?
8. Show any fitness there may be in the use of the word "*school*" (l. 22).
9. What is the ordinary meaning of *cloister* ? Show the appropriateness of its use in l. 25.
10. Describe the versification of this poem.

EXTREME UNCTION.

Upon the hour when I was born,
 God said, "Another man shall be,"
 And the great Maker did not scorn
 Out of Himself to fashion me ;
 He sunned me with His ripening looks, 5
 And Heaven's rich instincts in me grew,
 As effortless as woodland nooks
 Send violets up and paint them blue.

Yes, I who now, with angry tears,
 Am exiled back to brutish clod, 10
 Have borne unquenched for four-score years
 A spark of the eternal God ;
 And to what end ? How yield I back
 The trust for such high uses given ?
 Heaven's light hath but revealed a track 15
 Whereby to crawl away from Heaven.

Men think it is an awful sight
 To see a soul just set adrift
 On that drear voyage from whose night
 The ominous shadows never lift ; 20
 But 'tis more awful to behold
 A helpless infant newly born,
 Whose little hands unconscious hold
 The keys of darkness and of morn.

Mine held them once ; I flung away 25
 Those keys that might have open'd set
 The golden sluices of the day,
 But clutch the keys of darkness yet ;—
 I hear the reapers surging go
 Into God's harvest ; I, that might 30
 With them have chosen, here below
 Grope shuddering at the gates of night.

O glorious Youth, that once was mine !
 O high Ideal ! all in vain
 Ye enter at this ruined shrine 35
 Whence worship ne'er shall rise again ;
 The bat and owl inhabit here,
 The snake nests in the altar-stone,
 The sacred vessels moulder near ;
 The image of the God is gone. 40

—James Russell Lowell.

1. In a single phrase or short sentence state the subject of this poem.
2. In a single phrase or short sentence state the main idea brought out in each of the eight-line stanzas, and shew the connection of each of these ideas with the subject of the poem.
3. State frankly your opinion of this poem, and what, if anything, you admire in it.

IN MEMORIAM, II.

Old Yew, which graspest at the stones
 That name the under-lying dead,
 Thy fibres net the dreamless head,
 Thy roots are wrapt about the bones.

The seasons bring the flower again, 5
 And bring the firstling to the flock ;
 And in the dusk of thee, the clock
 Beats out the little lives of men.

O not for thee the glow, the bloom, 10
 Who changest not in any gale,
 Nor branding summer suns avail
 To touch thy thousand years of gloom :

And gazing on thee, sullen tree,
 Sick for thy stubborn hardihood,
 I seem to fail from out my blood 15
 And grow incorporate into thee.

—*Alfred Tennyson.*

1. Tell concisely the subject of this poem, and of each stanza in it.
2. Show the development of the thought in this poem and the appropriateness of the introduction of the idea which each clause expresses.

TO THE CUCKOO.

O blithe New-comer ! I have heard,
 I hear thee and rejoice.
 O Cuckoo ! shall I call thee Bird,
 Or but a wandering Voice ?

While I am lying on the grass, 5
 Thy two-fold shout I hear ;
 From hill to hill it seems to pass,
 At once far off and near.

Though babbling only to the vale,
 Of sunshine and of flowers, 10
 Thou bringest unto me a tale
 Of visionary hours.

Thrice welcome, darling of the Spring !
 Even yet thou art to me
 No Bird : but an invisible Thing, 15
 A voice, a mystery ;

The same whom in my School-boy days
 I listened to ; that Cry
 Which made me look a thousand ways
 In bush, and tree, and sky. 20

To seek thee did I often rove
 Through woods and on the green ;
 And thou wert still a hope, a love
 Still longed for, never seen.

And I can listen to thee yet ; 25
 Can lie upon the plain
 And listen, till I do beget
 That golden time again.

O blessed Bird ! the earth we pace
 Again appears to be 30
 An unsubstantial, faery place ;
 That is fit home for Thee !

— *William Wordsworth.*

1. Express in a phrase or short sentence the main thought or feeling brought out in this poem.

2. Show the appropriateness of this thought or feeling to the external circumstances which suggest it.

3. Show the appropriateness of the versification.

THE GREEN LINNET.

Beneath these fruit-tree boughs that shed
 Their snow-white blossoms on my head,
 With brightest sunshine round me spread
 Of spring's unclouded weather,
 In this sequester'd nook how sweet 5
 To sit upon my orchard-seat !
 And birds and flowers once more to greet,
 My last year's friends together.

One have I mark'd, the happiest guest
 In all this covert of the blest : 10
 Hail to Thee, far above the rest
 In joy of voice and pinion !
 Thon, Linnet ! in thy green array
 Presiding Spirit here to-day
 Dost lead the revels of the May ; 15
 And this is thy dominion.

While birds, and butterflies, and flowers,
 Make all one band of paramours,
 Thou, ranging up and down the bowers,
 Art sole in thy employment : 20
 A Life, a Presence like the Air,
 Scattering thy gladness without care,
 Too blest with any one to pair :
 Thyself thy own enjoyment.

Amid yon tuft of hazel trees 25
 That twinkle to the gusty breeze
 Behold him perch'd in ecstasies,
 Yet seeming still to hover ;
 There ! where the flutter of his wings
 Upon his back and body flings 30
 Shadows and sunny glimmerings,
 That cover him all over.

My dazzled sight he oft deceives—
 A Brother of the dancing leaves ;
 Then flits, and from the cottage-eaves 35
 Pours forth his song in gushes ;
 As if by that exulting strain
 He mock'd and treated with disdain
 The voiceless Form he chose to feign,
 While fluttering in the bushes.

—*William Wordsworth.*

(1) Express in a phrase or short sentence the main thought or feeling brought out in this poem.

(2) Show the appropriateness of this thought or feeling to the external circumstances which suggest it.

(3) Show the appropriateness of the versification.

(4) What is meant by "*joy of pinion*" (l. 12) ; "*Art sole in thy employment*" (l. 20) ; "*A Brother of the dancing leaves*" (l. 34) ? In what respects does the poet conceive the linnet as being "*like the air*" (l. 21) ?

MEMORABILIA.

Ah ! did you see Shelley plain,
 And did he stop and speak to you,
 And did you speak to him again ?
 How strange it seems and new !

But you were living before that,
 And also you are living after ;
 And the memory I startled at—
 My startling moves your laughter !

I crossed a moor, with a name of its own,
 And a certain use in the world, no doubt,
 Yet a hand's-breadth of it shines alone
 'Mid the blank miles round about. 10

For these I picked up on the heather
 And there I put inside my breast
 A moulted feather, an eagle-feather !
 Well, I forget the rest. 15

—Robert Browning.

SIR GALAHAD.

My good blade carves the casques of men.
 My tough lance thrusteth sure,
 My strength is as the strength of ten,
 Because my heart is pure.
 The shattering trumpet shrilleth high, 5
 The hard brands shiver on the steel,
 The splinter'd spear-shafts crack and fly,
 The horse and rider reel :
 They reel, they roll in clanging lists,
 And when the tide of combat stands, 10
 Perfume and flowers fall in showers,
 That lightly rain from ladies' hands.

How sweet are looks that ladies bend
 On whom their favours fall !
 For them I battle till the end, 15
 To save from shame and thrall :
 But all my heart is drawn above,
 My knees are bow'd in crypt and shrine :
 I never felt the kiss of love,
 Nor maiden's hand in mine. 20

More bounteous aspects on me beam,
 Me mightier transports move and thrill;
 So keep I fair thro' faith and prayer
 A virgin heart in work and will.

* * * * *

Sometimes on lonely mountain-meres 25

I find a magic bark;
 I leap on board: no helmsman steers:
 I float till all is dark.

A gentle sound, an awful light!
 Three angels bear the holy Grail: 30

With folded feet, in stoles of white,
 On sleeping wings they sail.

Ah, blessed vision! blood of God!

My spirit beats her mortal bars,
 As down dark tides the glory slides, 35
 And star-like mingles with the stars.

* * * * *

A maiden knight—to me is given
 Such hope, I know not fear;
 I yearn to breathe the airs of heaven
 That often meet me here. 40

I muse on joy that will not cease,
 Pure spaces clothed in living beams,
 Pure lilies of eternal peace,
 Whose odours haunt my dreams;
 And, stricken by an angel's hand, 45
 This mortal armour that I wear,
 This weight and size, this heart and eyes,
 Are touch'd, are turn'd to finest air.

The clouds are broken in the sky,
 And thro' the mountain-walls 50

A rolling organ-harmony
 Swells up, and shakes and falls.

Then move the trees, the copses nod,
 Wings flutter, voices hover clear:
 'O just and faithful knight of God! 55
 Ride on! the prize is near.'

So pass I hostel, hall, and grange;
 By bridge and ford, by park and pale,
 All-arm'd I ride, whate'er betide,
 Until I find the holy Grail. 60

—*Alfred Tennyson.*

ST. AGNES' EVE.

Deep on the convent-roof the snows
 Are sparkling to the moon :
 My breath to heaven like vapour goes :
 May my soul follow soon !
 The shadows of the convent-towers 5
 Slant down the snowy sward,
 Still creeping with the creeping hours
 That lead me to my Lord :
 Make Thou my spirit pure and clear
 As are the frosty skies, 10
 Or this first snow-drop of the year
 That in my bosom lies.

As these white robes are soil'd and dark,
 To yonder shining ground ;
 As this pale taper's earthly spark, 15
 To yonder argent round ;
 So shows my soul before the Lamb,
 My spirit before Thee ;
 So in my earthly house I am,
 To that I hope to be. 20
 Break up the heavens, O Lord ! and far,
 Thro' all yon starlight keen,
 Draw me, thy bride, a glittering star,
 In raiment white and clean.

He lifts me to the golden doors ; 25
 The flashes come and go ;
 All heaven bursts her starry floors,
 And strows her lights below,
 And deepens on and up ! the gates
 Roll back, and far within 30
 For me the Heavenly Bridegroom waits,
 To make me pure of sin.
 The sabbath of Eternity,
 One sabbath deep and wide—
 A light upon the shining sea— 35
 The Bridegroom with his bride !

—*Alfred Tennyson.*

THE REVERIE OF POOR SUSAN.

At the corner of Wood street, when daylight appears,
 Hangs a thrush that sings loud, it has sung for three years ;
 Poor Susan has passed by the spot, and has heard
 In the silence of morning the song of the bird.

'Tis a note of enchantment ; what ails her ? She sees 5
 A mountain ascending, a vision of trees ;
 Bright columns of vapour through Lothbury glide,
 And a river flows on through the vale of Cheapside.

Green pastures she views in the midst of the dale,
 Down which she so often has tripped with her pail ; 10
 And a single small cottage, a nest like a dove's,
 The one only dwelling on earth that she loves.

She looks, and her heart is in heaven, but they fade,
 The mist and the river, the hill and the shade ;
 The stream will not flow, and the hill will not rise, 15
 And the colours have all passed away from her eyes.

—William Wordsworth.

O CAPTAIN! MY CAPTAIN!

(ON THE DEATH OF LINCOLN.)

O Captain ! my Captain ! our fearful trip is done,
 The ship has weathered every rock, the prize we sought is won.
 The port is near, the bells I hear, the people all exulting,
 While follow eyes the steady keel, the vessel grim and daring ;
 But O heart ! heart ! heart ! 5

O the bleeding drops of red,

When on the deck my Captain lies,
 Fallen cold and dead.

O Captain ! my Captain ! rise up and hear the bells ;
 Rise up—for you the flag is flung—for you the bugle trills, 10
 For you bouquets and ribbon'd wreaths—for you the shores a-
 crowding,

For you they call, the swaying mass, their eager faces turning ;
 Here Captain, dear father !

This arm beneath your head !

It is some dream that on the deck, 15
 You've fallen cold and dead.

My Captain does not not answer, his lips are pale and still,
 My father does not feel my arm, he has no pulse nor will,
 The ship is anchor'd safe and sound, its voyage closed and done,
 From fearful trip the victor ship comes it with object won; 20
 Exult O shores, and ring O bells !

But I with mournful tread,

Walk the deck my Captain lies,

Fallen cold and dead.

— *Walt Whitman.*

COMPOSED UPON WESTMINSTER BRIDGE, SEPTEMBER 3, 1802.

Earth has not anything to show more fair:
 Dull would he be of soul who could pass by
 A sight so touching in its majesty:
 This city now doth, like a garment, wear
 The beauty of the morning ; silent, bare,
 Ships, towers, domes, theatres, and temples lie
 Open unto the fields and to the sky ;
 All bright and glittering in the smokeless air.

Never did sun more beautifully steep
 In his first splendour, valley, rock, or hill ;
 Never saw I, never felt, a calm so deep !
 The river glideth at his own sweet will ;
 Dear God ! The very houses seem asleep,
 And all that mighty heart is lying still.

— *William Wordsworth.*

ODE.

How sleep the brave who sink to rest,
 By all their country's wishes blest !
 When Spring, with dewy fingers cold,
 Returns to deck their hallowed mould,
 She there shall dress a sweeter sod
 Than Fancy's feet have ever trod.

By fairy hands their knell is rung ;
 By forms unseen their dirge is sung ;
 There Honour comes, a pilgrim gray,
 To bless the turf that wraps their clay ;
 And Freedom shall a while repair,
 To dwell a weeping hermit there.

— *William Collins.*

THE GLIMPSE.

Just for a day you crossed my life's dull track,
 Put my ignobler dreams to sudden shame,
 Went your bright way, and left me fall back
 On my own world of poorer deed and aim ;

To fall back on my meaner world, and feel
 Like one who, dwelling 'mid some smoke-dimmed town,—
 In a brief pause of labour's sullen wheel,—
 'Scaped from the street's dead dust and factory's frown,—

In stainless daylight saw the pure seas roll,
 Saw mountains pillaring the perfect sky :
 Then journeyed home, to carry in his soul
 The torment of the difference till he die.

—William Watson.

THE LAST WORD. ✓

Creep into thy narrow bed,
 Creep, and let no more be said !
 Vain thy onset ! all stands fast.
 Then thyself must break at last.

Let the long contention cease !
 Geese are swans and swans are geese.
 Let them have it how they will !
 Thou art tired ; best be still. .

5

They out-talk'd thee, hiss'd thee, tore thee ?
 Better men fared thus before thee ;
 Fired their ringing shot and pass'd,
 Hotly charged—and sank at last.

10

Charge once more, then, and be dumb !
 Let the victors, when they come,
 When the forts of folly fall,
 Find thy body by the wall.

15

—Matthew Arnold.

FROM "THE EARTHLY PARADISE."

APOLOGY

Dreamer of dreams, born out of my due time,
 Why should I strive to set the crooked straight?
 Let it suffice me that my murmuring rhyme
 Beats with light wing against the ivory gate,
 Telling a tale not too importunate 5
 To those who in the sleeping region stay,
 Lulled by the singer of an empty day.

Folk say, a wizard to a northern king
 At Christmas tide such wondrous things did shew,
 That through one window men beheld the spring, 10
 And through another saw the summer glow,
 And through a third the fruited vines a-row,
 While still, unheard, but in its wonted way,
 Piped the drear wind of that December day.

—William Morris.

ON HIS BEING ARRIVED AT THE AGE OF TWENTY-THREE.

How soon hath Time, the subtle thief of youth,
 Stolen on his wing my three-and-twentieth year!
 My hasting days fly on with full career,
 But my late spring no bud or blossom sheweth,
 Perhaps my semblance might deceive the truth, 5
 That I to manhood am arrived so near;
 And inward ripeness doth much less appear,
 That some more timely-happy spirits endueth.

Yet be it less or more, or soon or slow,
 It shall be still in strictest measure even 10
 To that same lot, however mean or high,
 Towards which time leads me, and the will of Heaven;
 All is, if I have grace to use it so,
 As ever in my great Task-master's eye.

—John Milton.

ON HIS BLINDNESS.

When I consider how my light is spent
 Ere half my days, in this dark world and wide,
 And that one talent which is death to hide,
 Lodged with me useless, though my soul more bent
 To serve therewith my Maker, and present 5
 My true account, lest He, returning chide ;
 "Doth God exact day-labour, light denied ?"
 I fondly ask ; but patience, to prevent
 That murmur, soon replies, "God doth not need
 Either man's work, or His own gifts ; who best 10
 Bear His mild yoke, they serve Him best ; His state
 Is kingly ; thousands at His bidding speed,
 And post o'er land and ocean without rest ;
 They also serve who only stand and wait."

—John Milton.

TO AUTUMN.

Season of mists and mellow fruitfulness !
 Close bosom-friend of the maturing sun ;
 Conspiring with him how to load and bless
 With fruit the vines that round the thatch-eaves run ; 5
 To bend with apples the moss'd cottage-trees,
 And fill all fruit with ripeness to the core ;
 To swell the gourd, and plump the hazel shells
 With a sweet kernel ; to set budding more,
 And still more, later flowers for the bees,
 Until they think warm days will never cease, 10
 For Summer has o'er-brimm'd their clammy cells.

Who hath not seen thee oft amid thy store ?
 Sometimes whoever seeks abroad may find
 Thee sitting careless on a granary floor,
 Thy hair soft-lifted by the winnowing wind ; 15
 Or on a half-reap'd furrow sound asleep,
 Drows'd with the fume of poppies, while thy hook
 Spares the next swath and all its twined flowers ;
 And sometime like a gleaner thou dost keep
 Steady thy laden head across a brook ; 20
 Or by a cider-press, with patient look,
 Thou watchest the last oozeings, hours by hours.

Where are the songs of Spring? Ay, where are they?
 Think not of them, Thou hast thy music too,
 While barrèd clouds bloom the soft-dying day, 25
 And touch the stubble-plains with rosy hue;
 Then in a wailful choir the small gnats mourn
 Among the river salallows, borne aloft
 Or sinking as the light wind lives or dies;
 And full-grown lambs loud bleat from hilly bourn; 30
 Hedge-crickets sing; and now with treble soft
 The redbreast whistles from a garden-croft,
 And gathering swallows twitter in the skies.
 —*John Keats.*

THE CHAMBERED NAUTILUS.

This is the ship of pearl, which, poets feign,
 Sails the unshadowed main,—
 The venturous bark that flings
 On the sweet summer wind its purpled wings
 In gulfs enchanted, where the siren sings, 5
 And coral reefs lie bare,
 Where the cold sea-maids rise to sun their streaming hair.

 Its webs of living gauze no more unfurl;
 Wrecked is the ship of pearl!
 And every chambered cell, 10
 Where its dim dreaming life was wont to dwell,
 As the frail tenant shaped his growing shell,
 Before thee lies revealed,—
 Its irised ceiling rent, its sunless crypt unsealed!

 Year after year beheld the silent toil 15
 That spread its lustrous coil;
 Still, as the spiral grew,
 He left the past year's dwelling for the new,
 Stole with soft step its shining archway through,
 Built up its idle door, 20
 Stretched in his last-found home, and knew the old no more.

 Thanks for the heavenly message brought by thee,
 Child of the wandering sea,
 Cast from her lap forlorn!
 From thy dead lips a clearer note is born 25
 Than ever Triton blew from wreathed horn!

While on mine ear it rings,
Through the deep caves of thought I hear a voice that sings :—
Build thee more stately mansions, O my soul,

As the swift seasons roll ! 30

Leave thy low-vaulted past !
Let each new temple, nobler than the last,
Shut thee from heaven with a dome more vast,

Till thou at length art free,
Leaving thine outgrown shell by life's unresting sea ! 35

—*Oliver Wendell Holmes.*









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